COLLEGE COMPOSITION

GROSE

College Composition

"Lucidity is in itself akin to character and to high and severe work."

BY

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Brown University

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TO MY MOTHER

CAROLINE BRISTOL GROSE

THIS BOOK IS

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PREFACE

In my own teaching of English composition I have wanted a textbook that was thoroughly practical in matter and manner. Such a book would recognize the needs and capacities of freshmen, putting its main stress on the doctrine and practice most useful in ordinary business and professional life, driving home its points with an abundance of unmistakably apposite illustrations, supplying workable exercises that really translate theory into practice. I have wanted a book that would appeal to the student's common sense and reasonableness; that would supplement my effort to help him cultivate a sensible and workmanlike attitude toward writing, an attitude that would persist long after this or that detail of theory had been forgotten and would be of positive use to him throughout life. But this book I desired was not narrowly utilitarian; without sacrificing any element of immediate usefulness, it must open here and there a window that looked out upon literature. Students who used the book would be aware of the fact that the course in composition was part of a liberal education. Such a book I have tried to write.

I also wished the book to allow me a certain elbow-room. I wanted to be able to pick and choose among examples and exercises, and to depart when I would from the order of the book without thereby convicting the author of disorderliness. Accordingly *College Composition* provides more material than an ordinary class will use in a single year. The instructor has a large latitude in choosing the work best suited to a particular group of students. He may, for example, omit the chapter on argument or the chapter on description—or both of these chapters. He

may, when fate is kind and gives him a properly prepared class, use the material on grammar, punctuation, and spelling to be found in Appendix A, only for occasional reference or for extra work on the part of a few students. In another class he may give regular instruction in these matters, properly, of course, the concern of the school rather than the college, but necessarily treated somewhere in any college textbook that faces the facts. That they are in the appendix rather than in the body of the book is due to my belief that such elementary matters ought not to be an integral part of the regular freshman course.

The order of topics is the one I prefer to follow. But the organization of the book is such that the instructor may readily alter the order in which the main topics are treated. For example, after the class has read Chapter I the instructor may assign a review of grammar and may then proceed to the study of sentences and words in Part Three, taking up finally the whole composition by assigning "Fundamental Principles" and such of the chapters in Part Two as there may be time or use for. In one particular, however, it would be well to keep the order adopted in the book; a study of "Fundamental Principles" should precede a study of any of the chapters in Part Two, because those chapters assume acquaintance with the general principles of structure.

Special care has been taken to make use of the extensive illustrative material, whether in text or appendix, by means of frequent references and of exercises based upon it.

I take pleasure in acknowledging my great indebtedness to my former teachers, Professors Lindsay T. Damon and George W. Benedict, of Brown University, for much valuable criticism and many helpful suggestions.

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PART ONE

INVENTION AND STRUCTURE

CHAPTER I

PRELIMINARIES

I. The Purpose of the Course

Two misconceptions. To gain a clear understanding of the purpose of required work in English composition some students may need to rid their minds of two common misconceptions. One is that the college course in composition is only a review or repetition of work done in school. There is repetition, to be sure. The student of composition deals in college with pretty much the same body of rules and principles that he dealt with in school. There is no such obvious progression as that from geometry to trigonometry. But progression there is, nevertheless. It consists largely in the adoption of a more mature point of view and a more exacting standard of performance. The student's ability to express himself is expected to keep pace with his growth in knowledge and experience.

The other misconception is that the composition course is designed chiefly for prospective authors. Such a view is naturally discouraging to those who have neither literary talents nor literary ambitions. Fortunately for them, however, it is a false view. The general course in composition is not vocational; it does not specialize, as do courses in play writing, short-story writing, or journalism. Its program is based on the needs and abilities of the average freshman or sophomore rather than on the needs and abilities of the occasional student who has unusual aptitude for writing. The latter will find the course useful, but not arranged exclusively for his benefit.

The true aim of the course. The general course in composition aims to help students gain a mastery of language adequate to their varied business, professional, and social needs. It seeks to make them more efficient members of society. When the college authorities make work in English composition a requisite for graduation, they are recognizing the fundamental usefulness of the power of clear and correct expression. This usefulness has a far wider basis than the requirements of any particular business or profession, for the ability to transfer knowledge and thoughts to the minds of others is essential to civilization, as well as to individual success in most occupations. Moreover, that ability does not come of itself, even to a genius, but is the result in large part of serious study and ample practice.

> Napoleon . . . at his desk scribbling off orders and messages as fast as his nimble fingers can travel, his secretaries . . . grasping each finished piece from under his pen and sending it off immediately by courier without revision or correction, is a dazzling picture for the military leader to contemplate. In his writing, a commander capable of carrying out single-handed all the phases and minor items of the mightiest of campaigns could, no doubt, be precise and accurate habitually. He was a genius. Yet Napoleon had had long years of practice in putting his will into words; . . . he began to compose orders at a time of life when most of us have not even chosen our careers.[1]

Because the ability to make one's meaning clear is vitally important and because study and practice are the surest means of attaining that ability, composition work is made obligatory in most colleges. And for the same reasons every student who wishes to make the most of himself and his life will strive for effectiveness in his speaking and writing, and enter whole-heartedly into the work of the course.

[1]Major W. A. Ganoe, *The English of Military Communications*, pp. 2-3. Used by permission of the Banta Publishing Co.

II. The Nature of Composition

Organization. Composition involves selection and arrangement. Whatever else it may be, a piece of writing or a talk which is formless, made up of sentences merely strung together by a chance association of ideas, is not a composition in the sense in which that term is used in this book, any more than a heap of bricks, beams, shingles, and boards is a building. To produce a composition the writer or speaker, like the builder, must select his materials and fit them together in accordance with some design or plan. The sentences must be made to work together, to bear a sensible relation to one another. A composition, in short, is a piece of writing or a speech which has been thought through, planned, organized.

Completeness. Furthermore, compositions, as we use the term, must be complete in themselves; they must be wholes, not parts requiring reference to something which precedes or follows before they can be understood. A composition may be a work of several volumes, or a magazine article, or a newspaper editorial, or a letter—any piece of writing, regardless of length, that is organized and is complete within its limits. It commonly is independent, but it may be a portion of a longer work if it retains its completeness when taken away from its context. The first chapter of Macaulay's *History of England* is not in this sense a composition, for it points unmistakably to succeeding chapters and is obviously just a part of a larger scheme; but the third chapter, in which Macaulay turns aside from the course of his narrative to describe the general state of England, is a composition, because it loses nothing when it is removed from its context and printed separately.

Substance and form. The Duke of Wellington's famous maxim of style—"Have something to say; say it"—con-

centrates attention on the vital elements of composition. For the two main considerations in writing and speaking are the thing to be said and the manner of saying it—substance and form. Each is important. Neglect of substance leads to triviality; neglect of form, to obscurity. The combination of worthy substance and adequate expression constitutes good writing.

There are writings in which defects of form are counterbalanced by the exceptional interest or significance of what is said. There are also writings in which form greatly outweighs substance, as Huxley points out in the first part of the following passage:

> A little song of Shakespeare or of Goethe is pure art; it is exquisitely beautiful, although its intellectual content may be nothing. A series of pictures is made to pass before your mind by the meaning of words, and the effect is a melody of ideas. Nevertheless, the great mass of the literature we esteem is valued, not merely because of having artistic form, but because of its intellectual content. And, if you will let me for a moment speak of the very highest forms of literature, do we not regard them as highest simply because the more we know, the truer they seem, and the more competent we are to appreciate beauty, the more beautiful they are? No man ever understands Shakespeare until he is old, though the youngest may admire him, the reason being that he satisfies the artistic instinct of the youngest and harmonizes with the ripest and richest experience of the oldest.

Huxley's statement would probably not satisfy extremists who put form above substance or substance above form; it represents a middle ground for those who are neither wholly wrapped up in literary technique nor wholly blind to its fascinations. But Huxley's remarks apply chiefly to compositions of sufficient excellence to be called literature; when we turn to everyday writings we find that substance cannot be allowed to run thin as it sometimes may in a lovely song. "Every sentence," as Emerson says,

"should be its own apology." If it lacks beauty, it must justify itself by what it expresses. Most of our sentences should make up in substance for what they lack in art. As the bullet must have weight of metal if it is to reach its mark, so the ordinary sentence must have weight of content.

Substance in the work of the course. There is a temptation to think that substance is not of much importance in themes or in the short talks one may be called on to make in the classroom; that as these are only exercises, it matters little what one writes or says if only one writes or says it well. For students with a strong bent toward authorship, substance may well be, for a time, a relatively minor consideration. Form is vitally interesting to them; they need room in which to try themselves out stylistically; editors and audiences will teach them the value of substance later on. But for the majority of students neglect of matter lessens the value of practice work as preparation for future needs. The sooner they learn to distinguish between the significant and the insignificant, to get their facts straight, and to express their real judgments, the better equipped will they be to overcome obstacles later on.

EXERCISES

1. Can you name any important occupations in which the power of clear and accurate expression would be of no advantage?

2. Name some important occupations in which the power of clear and accurate expression would be a decided advantage.

3. What is your own attitude toward letters, advertisements, newspaper articles, etc., that are obscure, clumsy, ungrammatical, misspelled, or badly punctuated?

4. What kinds of inference can you fairly make as to the personality and attainments of a correspondent whom you know only through his letters?

5. What is your personal attitude toward substance and form? —to which do you pay more attention in your reading?—which do you find the more difficult to master in your writing and speaking?

6. Why should you pay serious attention to substance in your practice writing and speaking?

7. Is the following paragraph adequate in substance? Is it satisfactory in form?

Ocean Waves

If one has never seen the waves along the shore after a big storm, he has missed a fine spectacle. Some of the prettiest sights I have ever viewed were big ocean waves pounding on the beach near my home. The sandy shores of the ocean are generally not as slanting as the inland bodies of water. This is accounted for in the fact that the larger waves break farther from the shore, and the rush of the water which follows gains a momentum whose force is nearly horizontal. It is said that if the wind should cease to blow in every part of the ocean for three days, there would be no waves. I have never heard that this has ever occurred.

8. Is the following criticism adequate in substance?

The Witching Hour

The play is very interesting. It contains such enthralling features as love, crime, regeneration, revenge, atonement, and mercy. The plot is typical of the region where it is laid. The tinge of spiritualism introduced serves to add a touch of the supernatural. All this is well woven into an admirable central theme substantiated by sub-plots of varying hues. Nothing more could be desired.

Jack Brookfield is a professional gambler who is perfectly human, susceptible to falling in love, care-free yet square; one who could never play a friend false. He has sufficient will-power to overcome evil tendencies when occasion demands. Justice Prentice is a sentimental jurist and a firm believer in spiritualism—which theory he demonstrates nobly. Frank

Hardmuth, the villain in the plot, is a hard-souled, ambitious attorney with no principles. He is a man to be avoided. Clay Whipple, an innocent young lover, who is the victim of a cruel hoax of fate, serves as the man in the main love affair, in which Viola Campbell, Jack Brookfield's niece, a vivacious, lovable young woman, plays the opposite part. Tom Denning is an unaccountable rum-soaked son of a millionaire, who meets an untimely fate. Mrs. Helen Whipple, Clay's mother, is an admirable character. She takes a great interest in Jack Brookfield. They were school-day lovers. Mrs. Alice Campbell, Jack's sister, is a tolerant lady of fine type.

III. Finding a Subject

Tests of a good subject. The problem of finding the right subject is one which the student must largely solve for himself. On some topics, of course, all the members of a class can write acceptably, but such topics are relatively few, whereas the number of possibilities for a given writer is limited only by the extent of his information, thought, feeling, and experience. In general, the question of what to write about is too individual to admit of any arbitrary or dogmatic answer. The final answer must come from the writer himself. There are, however, three useful questions every student should ask himself about any subject that attracts his attention:

1. Does it interest me?
2. Do I know enough about it, or can I without too much searching find the knowledge needed to supplement my own?
3. Can I treat it adequately in the space at my command?

If the answer to these questions is affirmative, he can at least feel assured that he is headed in the right direction; for a considerable part of the secret of good writing lies in

the fact that the author is interested in his subject and has something genuine to say about it.

Subjects from daily experience. Though the "average undergraduate" may have no real existence, let us imagine him to be alive in order that we may consider some of the material he could make use of in a course in composition. He has a healthy body and a fairly active mind, so that he is usually doing something or thinking about something. His life is not crowded with startling events; his deeds and thoughts are seldom very extraordinary; and yet he finds it all pretty interesting. He has learned that the familiar stuff of which his everyday life is made is likely to be interesting to others as well as to himself, for he likes to hear about the thoughts and experiences of his friends even though they are no more thrilling than his own. And so when it comes time for a theme, he is not forced to rack his brains for something "rich and strange" to write about, but may find his subject near home among the events, ideas, and feelings most familiar to him.

Happenings of the campus, the dormitory, and the classroom furnish some of his material. He takes a walk in the country; if he sees a crowd of boys in swimming, he may try to describe what they do and say, or he may be reminded of an incident in his own boyhood; perhaps he notices that the farmhouses or barns are unlike those near his home, and tries to explain the differences and the possible reasons for them; or he may spend a few minutes watching a squirrel gathering nuts, or a bird poking about in the underbrush by the roadside, and find in these things something that "springs his imagination"; the beauty of the landscape may seem to him worth putting into words, or the pleasant and invigorating sensations that come from walking rapidly along in the brisk air. He reads a book

or a story in a magazine, and writes a paper giving his impressions of it, telling honestly how it affects him; or he compares it with something else that he has read. He has been learning something about chemical energy, or the methods of ascertaining the height of a mountain, or the Roman conquest of Britain, or Aristotle's views on epic poetry, and he may explain these matters whenever he feels that he really knows something about them. There are certain to be things which he knows how to do well enough to tell others how to do them: perhaps how to take care of a horse, or raise chickens, or repair a punctured tire, or catch trout, or grow tomatoes under glass, or mix concrete, or get ready for a canoe-trip. Every alert youth will know how to expand this chance list; for his mind is full of memories, he has opinions of his own on many questions, he is constantly meeting people who interest him for one reason or another, he pays some attention to local and national politics—it would be idle, indeed, to attempt to catalogue all his possible subjects.

IV. Shaping the Subject

Possible methods. The following suggestions do not presume to describe the ways in which every experienced and competent writer gets his subjects into clearly defined form. He may follow the procedure here suggested, consciously or unconsciously; or he may begin writing with only a vague idea of the limits of his subject and determine these as he goes along, altering what he has already written to suit his more definite conceptions as they take shape; or he may have some system or lack of system all his own.[1] But the student who usually has set for him a task as definite, say, as "A paper of from five hundred to six hundred words, due on

[1]Cf. the peculiar system described by Poe in "The Philosophy of Composition."

Wednesday at 5:30 p. m.," will do well, as a rule, to make sure that his subject is in workable shape before he begins to write. Time thus spent will in the end be time saved.

Reducing a large subject. Many a student whose words flow slowly from his pen is afraid that he cannot scrape five or six hundred words together unless he has a large subject. Almost instinctively he turns to subjects which are really too large for him. Now to deal with subjects which are too big for the time and space that can be given them is pretty much like trying to pour a quart of water into a pint measure—there is too much waste and overflow. A small subject, strictly limited in scope, is practically certain to give better results for the same expenditure of time and energy than one which is too large. When a young man or woman of moderate knowledge and experience writes a short essay or address on "Constitutional Government in England," or "Honor," or "The Pleasures of Autumn," or "Rural Life in America," he or she is almost sure to be "stale, flat, and unprofitable," doing little more than bring together pallid statements of general truths which everybody knows.

But is not "Rural Life in America," for example, a fit subject for an essay? Emerson wrote an essay on a subject as big as "Farming," and surely Emerson knew something about writing. Quite true, but his essay, which contains about thirty-seven hundred words, is long by comparison with the average undergraduate composition. And furthermore, Emerson was a rare hand at packing much into a little space, and could state general truths—even obvious or well-known truths—in a striking and memorable way. For the undergraduate who is not master of a terse style and who is not particularly forceful in his generalizations, "Rural Life in America" would in all likelihood prove an unwieldy subject. His chance of success, of writing an interesting and informa-

tive paper, will probably be much better if he confines his attention to a single one of the many topics which are contained in the subject of rural life in America as a whole. He might, for instance, consider only the changes that have recently been taking place in American country life. Better still, he might limit himself to a single aspect of this lesser subject by dealing only with a certain class of changes and only with a particular section of the United States. In the end he would be treating some topic as compact and workable as "What the Automobile Is Doing for the Kansas Farmer," or "Portuguese Immigrants on Cape Cod," or "Educating the Kentucky Mountaineers." A little analysis of the kind just indicated will usually bring to light a variety of smaller topics latent in any large or general subject.

Developing a small subject. To look now at the other extreme, a subject as we first think of it may be too small to fill out properly a paper of the required length. True, no topic is in itself so trivial that a specialist or a writer of unusual imaginative power cannot make it profitable and interesting; but many subjects are so trifling that a person of ordinary knowledge or fancy can do nothing worth while with them. A short essay on "My Inkstand" may be full of information if written by a paleographer, or full of interesting human associations if written by an author of resource and fertility of ideas, but in the hands of one whose knowledge of inkstands is not impressive or whose flights of imagination rarely outlast a sentence it will weigh like lead on the spirits of an unoffending reader.

But the student would be hard put to it for things to write about if he dismissed every trivial topic that occurred to him and waited for full-grown subjects. He will often find it a good plan to follow up a chance hint and see what it leads to, just as professional writers, especially writers of fiction, are

constantly doing.[1] A passing suggestion may be the germ of a really good, or at any rate, of a usable idea. As he sits at his desk wondering what to write about, his eye may suggest to him "My Inkstand." But only a few ideas branch out from this main stem; and in his search for more substance he relates his inkstand to his ink, his pen, his blotter, his paper. Yet a theme written on a set of objects like these would be a work of shreds and patches with no central idea to hold the parts together. Then, as he is about to turn his thoughts in another direction, it may occur to him that considerable effort and ingenuity and widespread coöperation have gone into the making of these things. In this thought, he may feel, lies the germ of a composition. A half-hour with an encyclopedia will give him some notion of the variety and extent of the operations that have been necessary to the manufacture of pen, ink, and paper. He can then give a bird's-eye view of these operations, showing finally that the tools thus manufactured are for the moment balked of their proper service because a student up on the third floor of the Old South dormitory cannot think of a subject to write about.

V. Gathering Material

Supplementing one's knowledge of a subject. Unless the subject chosen is drawn from personal experience or from other very familiar material—and sometimes, even then—one will probably feel the need of adding to his own stock of information on it. One's knowledge of some particular point often has a disconcerting way of turning out to be hazy or impressionistic when he tries to set it down in black and white. Even writers of fiction, who at first thought may seem to be free from the bondage of fact, are frequently engaged in

[1]Cf. "Finding Narrative Material," p. 294 ff.

an eager hunt for precise information. When Kipling was writing *Captains Courageous*, he visited Gloucester, made a careful inspection of a fishing schooner, and gathered his facts about the routine aboard the vessel, the method of fishing, the kind of men engaged in the fisheries, and their tricks of speech, from conversations with the fishermen themselves. Or consider the search for facts that went to the making of such a novel as Hergesheimer's *Java Head*, which attempts to re-create the atmosphere of Salem in the days when it was a famous seaport: imagination did not supply the many details of costume, furniture, architecture, and social life; nor the knowledge of the ports which Salem ships visited and of the goods they carried and of the way they were brought to dock at Derby Wharf without aid from tugboats. The student of English composition, like the professional writer, will often find it necessary to supplement his own knowledge of a subject; occasionally he may be asked to work up a subject about which he knows little or nothing. Sometimes, in such cases, he may gather the facts he wants from a visit to a museum or a [illegible] ory, a farm or a factory, or from c[illegible] those who have first-hand knowledge; but in the main he must put his reliance on books. He must learn how to avail himself of the information stored away in the college library. In the following paragraphs will be found some suggestions of ways and means.

Getting acquainted with the college library. The hours a student spends in making himself familiar with the arrangement and workings of the college library are not wasted. They will return a generous interest in the shape of increased efficiency, of time and labor saved later on in the quest for information. He will do better work and do it more easily if he learns to feel at home in the library. Here are a few questions he should find answers for as soon as possible:

Where is the catalogue of the library? Precisely what kinds of information does the catalogue give? Where are dictionaries, encyclopedias, and general reference books to be found? Are there any special or departmental reference collections open to his use? Where are recent accessions placed? Where are the current numbers of magazines and periodicals? Where are the "reserve" shelves? How may "reserve books" be obtained? How are books to be drawn from the library?

Finding the right books. An excellent way to begin a search for facts is to make a working bibliography—that is, a list of available books and articles that bear on the subject. In the majority of cases, probably, the titles of all the books needed will be listed in the subject catalogue of the library. But sometimes it requires a little ingenuity or patience to find them, for the word or phrase which the student has in mind when he goes to the catalogue may not be the word or phrase the librarian had in mind when he was classifying the books. A person who is experienced in using library catalogues does not give in at the first failure, but looks up synonymous and allied terms until he finds what he wants or is satisfied that the library does not contain it. If, for example, he does not find all the material he wishes listed under the subject *seaplane*, he will try *hydro-aëroplane*, *aëroplane* (also spelled *airplane*), *aëronautics*, *aviation*, *naval aëronautics*, *naval aircraft*, and *hydroplane*. Additions to the bibliography may sometimes be made by consulting the list of authorities given at the end of an encyclopedia article, and by noting references to other works in the books already found. Titles of articles in magazines (except the purely technical and scientific journals) may be obtained through the use of one of the alphabetically arranged indexes to periodicals, such as *Poole's Index* and *The Reader's Guide*, with which every good library is provided.

Of the various books and articles that the student has gathered together, some will obviously be more useful than others, and some may not be useful at all. Naturally he will try to select those which will give the best return for the time spent on them. He can probably make a more discriminating choice if he has a broad view of the subject to begin with; so if the subject is unfamiliar, he will do well to read first a brief general account of it. By this means he is enabled soonest to take his bearings in the midst of a new set of facts and avoid getting lost among the details. To work into a new subject without some preliminary survey of it is pretty much like making one's way through a trackless forest without help from sun or compass; one may finally arrive somewhere, but not by the shortest route. Concise but comprehensive statements about many topics may be found in encyclopedias, primers, handbooks, epitomes of history, biographical dictionaries, textbooks, and so forth.[1]

Having a broad view of the subject, knowing the general direction in which he wishes to travel, the student then goes on to weed out of his list the books which contain few or none of the facts he is seeking. This can usually be done with greatest dispatch by looking over the table of contents and the index, and sometimes by learning the author's purpose or point of view as given in his preface. Usually it is necessary to read a few paragraphs of the text before deciding whether or not to discard a book. Practice in examining books with a particular purpose in mind soon enables one to tell quickly the general character of a work. In what seems an incredibly short time an expert in research can select from among a number of volumes the few which will be most useful to him. And yet his selection is not haphazard; he has simply learned to know the character of a book without reading it from cover to cover.

[1]For a helpful discussion of reference books, see *Guide to the Use of Libraries*, by Hutchison, Johnson, and Williams.

Reading and note-taking. Reading for special facts, "reading up" on a subject, as we say, should be made a very different process from reading for pleasure or stimulus. The object is to gather as much material as possible in the time available; and hence it is necessary to work methodically, economizing time and labor wherever possible. Intelligent reading for facts is partly a matter of intelligent skipping. There is danger, of course, that important facts may be overlooked, and yet research and fact-gathering would be hopeless if one did not skip the passages which fail to forward the work in hand. Attention must be focused on those portions of a book or article which are germane to the purpose. Mental concentration is required—a valuable trait to cultivate. Many students will have to resist, and resist hard, the temptation to let their minds roam off on interesting by-paths. The endeavor should be to find out at a glance whether a paragraph should be read or skipped, and if it is to be skipped, not to waste time on it but to pass resolutely forward to the next.

There are various ways of taking notes on one's reading, and it does not matter greatly what way one adopts provided it is methodical and labor-saving. Just to put down facts at random in a note-book may seem the easiest at the moment, but in the long run it is wasteful, for when the time comes to work these facts into an essay it is necessary to go over the same pages of notes again and again. To many, a system of taking notes on cards or slips of paper has proved a great convenience. Each fact or short quotation is set down on a separate slip (3 x 5 inches is a useful and economical size), with an indication of its source; then, when the material has all been gathered, the slips are sorted into groups, related facts being brought together, and arranged in any desired order. A cardinal point to bear in mind in using this system is to put but one statement or one quotation on a slip, for

the sake of convenience in handling later on. Perhaps the greatest advantage of the scheme is its flexibility, as the arrangement may be altered at any time and to any extent merely by shifting one or more slips about.

Some examples of note-taking are here given. The first illustrates a reference to a passage to which the student wishes to return later on:

Desc. of early refineries
W. S. Tower, *T. Story of Oil*, p. 5. 806.14 T23

This note gives the subject, the book and page where the passage may be found, and the library number of the volume for later reference. Abbreviation is used when it can cause no misunderstanding.

The second example illustrates the customary gleaning of facts which the note-taker expects to use:

If all objects reflected light completely, everything would be white. If all objects absorbed light entirely, the world would be in total darkness.

C. G. Cutler, *Mòdern Color*, pp. 14-15

This note gives the essence of a paragraph in the book named. The reference to the work from which the facts are taken is exact, but omits the library number because the writer feels no necessity of consulting the book again.

The third example is of a sentence that is to be quoted:

"He who writes carelessly confesses thereby at the very outset that he does not attach much importance to his own thoughts."

Schopenhauer, "On Style"

The quotation marks show that the sentence has been copied verbatim. The reference to the source is vaguer than

in the preceding illustrations, but is definite enough for the writer's purpose. When he comes to use this quotation he will perhaps not even mention the particular essay from which it is taken, but will simply give the author's name.

VI. Literary Ethics

Unconscious borrowing. In order to give his work adequate substance the student of composition will many times find it necessary, as suggested in the preceding section, to borrow material from others; and he should thoroughly understand the ethical code which governs all honorable literary work. Unconscious borrowings he need take no thought of. Outside of what he has learned through observation and experience, all his knowledge is second-hand. That is to be presumed; he need not mention it.

Conscious borrowing. When he consciously borrows he should know that published facts are common property, but that the personal reaction to facts is private property. Whenever he finds a fact in print, he may use it. If the fact is commonly known, no one needs to tell where he first found it. If the fact has recently been brought to light, or has not been used sufficiently to have become part of the general stock of knowledge, its discoverer, or the book in which it was found, should be mentioned. Thus one need not mention Newton in stating the law of gravitation, nor Copernicus in stating that the earth moves about the sun, nor Euclid in stating that the sum of the angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles; but if one were to use in a discussion of heredity the fact that cutting off the tails of white mice for several successive generations has no effect upon the tails of the offspring, one would assuredly cite Weismann as the discoverer. Upon the body of published facts, then, the

writer may draw at will, giving credit where credit is due and so keeping himself clear of suspicion that he is posing as an originator.

But it is only the facts themselves that are common property; the particular use that is made of them is private. A writer's opinions, arguments, and conclusions, though drawn from the common stock of facts, belong to him and must not be used unless he is given credit for them. Violations of the code frequently take this form: A student who is asked to write an argument finds, let us say, a published article on inter-collegiate athletics; he adopts the main points of the article and as many of the subordinate points as he has room for, follows the line of thought in his original, and draws from it such facts as he needs; he hands in his result not as a frankly acknowledged summary but as his own work. What credit does he deserve for a paper in which all the labor of gathering facts and relating them and all the constructive work of composition have been done by someone else? Not to mince words, it is dishonest to use other writers' ideas consciously as though they were one's own; it is both theft and an attempt to deceive. A writer's mode of expression, too, his phrases, his way of saying things, are as much his own property as his ideas or his eye-glasses. Scrupulous care should be taken to see that all borrowings of phrase appear frankly as borrowings.

Direct quotation. Direct quotations are commonly placed within quotation marks. If more than one paragraph is quoted, marks should be placed at the beginning of each paragraph and at the end of the last. In printed matter quotation marks are usually dispensed with if the quotation is printed in a different type from that in the body of the text. This is a convenient method when extracts are used for comment or illustration, as in this textbook.

Care should be taken to quote exactly. Verify quotations whenever possible. If any portion of the original is omitted within the body of the quotation, the omission should be indicated by a series of periods:

> As long as the head of the army was Washington, he needed no insignia to distinguish him. Whether on foot or in the saddle . . . on a Sunday parade, or as he galloped through the bullets to meet, and lead back into the fire, a retreating regiment, he looked . . . the king of men that nature had made him.[1]

If any additional words are inserted in the quotation, they should be put in brackets:

> He always seems to me prouder and vainer when he blames himself than when he praises himself [there is some truth in this], for it is a species of unbearable pride that enables a man to be proud of his faults rather than to be humiliated by them.[2]

Whether or not the source of a quotation should be given depends largely on the use to which the quotation is put. In case of a quotation used for its apt phrasing, literary suggestiveness, or similar quality, one may mention the author or not, just as one wishes:

(1) In the days when streets were less wearily familiar than now . . . I have lain awake on stifling summer nights, thinking of luckier friends by moor and stream, and listening for the whistles from certain railway stations, veritable "horns of Elfland, faintly blowing."[3]

(2) Lord Brook, on the contrary, stood quite by himself, or in Cowley's words, was "a vast species alone."[4]

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[1]Sir George Trevelyan, *The American Revolution*, Vol. I, p. 325.
[2]Emile Faguet, *A Literary History of France*, p. 235.
[3]Kenneth Grahame, *Pagan Papers*, "The Romance of the Rail," p. 27.
[4]Jacob Zeitlin, *Hazlitt on English Literature*, p. 326.

But if a quotation is used as evidence for a fact or opinion, its author being summoned, as it were, to give his testimony, then its source should be definitely stated. Otherwise its value as evidence is either greatly lessened or completely nullified. Explicit reference may be made in footnotes, as in the following paragraph, or in the body of the text:

Brockett, in his *Glossary of North Country Words* (1825), defines *tram* as "a small carriage on four wheels, so distinguished from a sledge; the word is Gothic."[1]

Indirect quotation. In making an indirect quotation it is ordinarily necessary to mention the source, as otherwise there would be no indication of one's indebtedness. To make an indirect quotation without giving a reader any hint of what one was doing would, in most instances, be regarded as plagiarism. The chief exception would be a case in which the source was so familiar that one's reader would easily recognize it and would realize at the same time that he was expected to recognize it. As with direct quotations, reference to the source is general or specific, according to one's purpose. Degrees of definiteness in reference to the source are illustrated in the following extracts:

(1) A recent French critic says of Madame de Staël that she had no style; she wrote just as she thought, but without being able to impart to her writing the living quality of her speech.[2]

(2) Amiel says of Renan that science was his material rather than his object; his object was style.[3]

(3) An hypothesis is any conception by which the mind goes beyond the known facts and seeks to establish relations between data of testimony and perception, so long as that conception is one among alternative possibilities and is not considered a

[1]Laurence Hutton, *Other Times and Other Seasons*, p. 68.
[2]John Burroughs, *Studies in Nature and Literature* ("Riverside Essays"), p. 88.
[3]The same, p. 96.

fact. This definition, adapted from Bosanquet's larger *Logic*, brings out the essential . . .[1]

(4) It is a Gallic custom, says Caesar, to stop travelers and insist upon their telling what they know or have heard. In the towns the crowd will throng around a merchant and make him tell where he has come from and give them the news. Upon such hearsay the Gauls enter upon measures of the gravest importance. The states which are deemed the best governed, he adds, have a law that whenever anyone has heard a report or rumor of public moment, he shall communicate it to a magistrate and to none else . . . It is not permitted to discuss public affairs save in an assembly.*

**Bellum Gallicum*, iv. 5; vi. 20.[2]

Other obligations. Conscious borrowings of ideas, of a particular plan for treating a particular subject, of some method of arranging a given group of facts, of information laboriously gathered by someone else, etc., are acknowledged in such a variety of ways that it is possible here to do nothing more than offer suggestions by means of a few characteristic specimens. The main thing is to make the acknowledgment clear.

(1) . . . The evidence points to a collaborator of German birth and education. And such a collaborator, not in the original composition of the play, but in the revision which I have assumed, might, I believe, be found in the person of Rudolf Weckherlin.*

[Three paragraphs of discussion follow.]

*Weckherlin has been already suggested as a possible collaborator by Ward, *English Dramatic Literature*, Vol. II, p. 428, *n.* I have done little more than follow out his suggestion.[3]

(2) In the solution of the problem as to the first Vespucius voyage I follow the lead of Varnhagen, but always independently and with the documentary evidence fully in sight.[4]

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[1]R. W. Sellars, *Essentials of Logic*, p. 197.
[2]Henry Osborn Taylor, *The Mediæval Mind*, Vol. I, p. 29. The starred footnote is a part of the quotation.
[3]Thomas Marc Parrott, *The Tragedies of George Chapman*, p. 691.
[4]John Fiske, *The Discovery of America*, Vol. I, pp. xiii-xiv.

(3) The various grades of culture need to be classified, and that most original and suggestive scholar, the late Lewis Morgan of Rochester, made a brilliant attempt in this direction, to which the reader's attention is now invited. Below *Civilization* Mr. Morgan* distinguishes two principal grades or stages of culture. . .

*See his great work on *Ancient Society*, New York, 1877.[1]

(4) For all these examples of American Yiddish I am indebted to the kindness of Abraham Cahan, editor of the *Jewish Daily Forward*.[2]

(5) Webster's inconsistency gave his opponents a formidable weapon for use against him—until it began to be noticed that the orthodox English spelling was quite as inconsistent. He sought to change *acre* to *aker*, but left *lucre* unchanged. He removed the final *f* from *bailiff*, *mastiff*, *plaintiff*, and *pontiff*, but left it in *distaff* . . . He deleted the silent *u* in *mould*, but left it in *court*. These slips were made the most of by Cobb in a pamphlet printed in 1831.* He also detected Webster in the frequent *faux pas* of using spellings in his definitions and explanations that conflicted with the spellings he advocated.

*A Critical Review of the Orthography of Dr. Webster's Series of Books . . .; New York, 1831.[3]

EXERCISES

1. Draw up a list of six subjects upon which any member of your class might be expected to write without previous preparation. Submit your list to the class for criticism and comparison.

2. Draw up a list of a dozen subjects based on your personal experience or observation. Compare your list with similar lists made by classmates.

3. In what general course of study are you most interested? Analyze the subject of this course into topics suitable for treatment in short papers.

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[1]John Fiske, *The Discovery of America*, Vol. 1, p. 24.
[2]H. L. Mencken, *The American Language*, p. 157.
[3]The same, p. 254.

4. Describe the way in which one or more of the subjects selected in Exercise 2, page 23, took final shape.

5. Reduce one of the following general topics to a subject suitable for a paper of five hundred words: The last presidential campaign; Football; Earthquakes; The American Indian; Automobiles.

6. Develop a subject suitable for a paper of five hundred words from a minor incident or circumstance that attracted your attention today.

7. Make a list of books and magazine articles in the college library on one of the following subjects:

The modern battleship	Our national parks
The Yorktown campaign	American missions in Japan
The production of sugar in the United States	The Battle of Waterloo
Colonial life in Virginia	The steam engine
American privateers in the War of 1812	The League of Nations
	Solar eclipses
	The thoroughbred racehorse

8. Describe the way you went to work to form your list in 7.

9. Answer the questions asked in "Getting acquainted with the college library," page 13 ff.

10. State in your own words your understanding of what constitutes dishonesty in written work.

CHAPTER II

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

Introductory. A composition is good in structure when it is unified, coherent, and well proportioned. It is unified if all its parts bear on the subject so directly that the main idea stands out clearly and the reader's attention is not drawn away by irrelevant statements. It is coherent if its parts follow one another in an orderly way, related statements being kept together and each preparing for the next. It is well proportioned if the most important parts are given most space.

To help the student attain these desirable qualities, five working principles are set forth in this chapter: Selection, Adaptation, Arrangement, Articulation, and Proportion. Like most guiding principles, they are simple and of wide application. Derived from the experience of successful writers, they should be regarded as wise and friendly counsel which directs the efforts of the learner toward surer and more effective methods of writing. In no sense are they limitations forced upon an unwilling generation. They deserve respect only as they embody sanity and wisdom, and are binding only as sanity and wisdom are binding.

For the sake of economy of time and of ease in our work, we should know these principles so thoroughly that we are guided by them almost instinctively. Mastery of the fundamentals of any art or craft or science means greater freedom for the workman. Every skilled worker, whether painter, sculptor, architect, cabinet-maker, chemist, or writer, works in accordance with certain principles as a matter of habit,

applying them to his task so naturally and inevitably that he is not always directly conscious that he is doing so. One who has thus mastered the principles of his art is able to work with a degree of freedom, ease, and sureness that the beginner has difficulty in imagining. Habit relieves the craftsman of much that requires of the apprentice conscious mental effort.

I. Selection

The working principle. *Include all material needed to bring out the main idea of the composition; reject material that is irrelevant.*

The essence of unity in composition is that the details shall all bear on a central idea, that each statement shall contribute to completeness and singleness of effect. The mind more easily retains facts grouped together by a main idea than an equal number of unrelated facts. It is easier, for example, to memorize a hundred words of poetry than a hundred gibberish words. The bond that holds together and gives significance to the parts of a composition is their common relation to a central and unifying thought or impression.

The unifying idea. The principle of selection assumes that the writer has a central idea in mind as he builds up his composition. The word *idea* in this connection should be understood in a very broad sense. It includes not only thoughts, but feelings as well. In the great majority of practical communications which aim to impart knowledge or opinion, the central idea will be a thought which can be definitely stated in a sentence or a paragraph. In the more clear-cut of these communications the main idea will be as explicit as a proposition in geometry. Thus John Tyndall, in *Matter and Force*, states the main idea of his address as follows:

One fundamental thought pervades all these statements: there is one tap root from which they all spring. That is the ancient maxim that out of nothing nothing comes; that neither in the organic nor in the inorganic world is power produced without the expenditure of power; that neither in the plant nor in the animal is there a creation of force or motion.

And we are all of us familiar with compositions which can be boiled down to such residues as "No act of legislation can nullify the law of supply and demand," "The submarine and the airplane have not displaced the battleship," "Agriculture in Georgia will be more prosperous with increased planting of mixed crops," "Equipment certificates are high grade investments," and "In the next war we should conscript wealth as well as men." But even in expositions and arguments the main idea is not always set forth in so many words. Those who have read Swift's *Modest Proposal* will recall a case in point. On the face of it, the unifying idea is that it would be to the advantage of all concerned if the young children of the poor in Ireland were sold in the markets for food. In writing his paper Swift adhered closely to this idea. But surely that is not the real impression he wished to leave with his readers. Behind the mask is a man sick at heart from the suffering he sees and enraged at the callousness which is indifferent to it or would trifle with it. We shall not be very far from the truth if we describe the unifying idea as a mood of white-hot indignation.

When we turn to narration and description, we find that explicit statements of the main idea are not so much the usual rule as in exposition and argument. Probably this is so, particularly in fiction and drama, because the unity is commonly due to a feeling, a mood, an impression, a sentiment, a point of view—or a combination of two or more of these. Feelings are usually less susceptible of expression in proposition form than is information, theory, or opinion;

and they are usually least impressive when so expressed. Emotion is best conveyed to a reader when the events, circumstances, or surroundings which gave rise to it are so presented that he, too, will share it. *Macbeth* is an example of a composition in which the idea is implicit. Nowhere in the play does Shakespeare speak to us directly, and none of the characters appears to be his spokesman. Being implicit, the main idea may be open to differences of interpretation. Some have professed to find it a moral platitude on the subject of ambition. But whatever purely intellectual dispute there may be as to the main idea of the play, few can fail to be impressed by the unity of its action or to share the emotion of its tragic mood.[1] Sometimes there is a compromise between the two methods of handling the main idea just considered; the author of poem or play or story may give his readers partial statements, or strong hints. Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* is an instance. The thesis of the novel is suggested by the sub-title, "A Pure Woman Faithfully Presented"; the emotional element, by a quotation from Shakespeare prefixed to the story:

> Poor wounded name! my bosom, as a bed,
> Shall lodge thee, till thy wound be thoroughly healed.

Completeness essential to unity. A piece of writing is not a unit if essential parts are missing. No matter how brief a composition is, it should contain enough material to make its main idea intelligible. Obscurity has various causes (among them faulty arrangement, defective sentences, and wrongly used words), but the cause that concerns us now is the failure to say the things that ought to be said to bring out the main idea of the composition. When details really necessary to an understanding of the subject are left

[1] That the dramatic form does not preclude explicit statement may be observed by reading the last three speeches in John Galsworthy's *Strife*.

out, the work is not a whole but a fragment. The following article contains many details (most of them superfluous), but lacks in essentials:

How to Choose a Camera

There are so many different kinds of cameras on the market that amateurs are confused when they go to buy one. They generally end by buying what the local dealer recommends from his stock. The results of such a purchase may be good enough for hit-or-miss snapshotters, but are often unsatisfactory to the ambitious amateur, who, after he has gained experience, may feel that he has been "stung." What we have to say on the subject is meant to enable such a person to make an intelligent choice of the best camera for his particular use.

Everyone knows the hand camera that uses roll films. Focusing is done by scale, the distance of the subject being judged by the eye, though some cameras have range-finders. The roll film camera has a view-finder in which the subject is viewed as a diminished image. The camera is held at the level of the waist, close to the body. Some hand cameras have a direct vision finder. In using this the camera is held at the level of the operator's eye.

Another type of hand camera uses both film packs and glass plates. In addition to the usual finder, such a camera is provided with a panel of ground glass. When preparations for taking the picture have been made, the panel is removed and the film pack adapter inserted in its place. Then the exposure is made.

View cameras cannot be used conveniently in the hand, but are set up on tripods. They have a long bellows extension, which permits the use of long focus lenses. Practically all makes of view cameras have rising and falling fronts, removable lens boards, reversible backs, and a swing-back actuated by rack and pinion to preserve parallelism of vertical lines.

Probably the most important single element of a camera is the lens, and great care should be exercised in its selection. No one lens, no matter how fine, will do all kinds of work equally well. Consequently we find that for some purposes the meniscus lens commonly fitted to box cameras is superior to the higher-priced anastigmat. In single achromatic, meniscus, and aplanatic rectilinear lens spherical aberration is only partly corrected, so that

these lenses must be used with a relatively small "stop," or diaphragm opening. These lenses are slower than an anastigmat with a working aperture of f 4.5. In making his choice the purchaser should bear in mind the law of optics, that gain in speed is accompanied by loss in depth of focus, and vice versa.

An accurate shutter is necessary for the best results. There are on the market several good makes of between-the-lens shutters. For very fast work, or when the light is weak in actinic power, a focal-plane shutter is efficient. For the former reason it is almost invariably fitted to cameras of the reflex type.

If the person who wants the most generally useful type of camera to own, considering his individual needs or desires, will bear the above facts in mind, he will no longer be at the mercy of the dealer who is anxious to push one particular line of cameras because he makes more money on them than on others.

The "ambitious amateur" who began reading this article in hopeful mood would end by feeling baffled. What is said about lenses, for instance, could lead only to confusion of mind. The essential information promised in the opening paragraph, and finally assumed to have been given, is left out. The author has merely assembled some miscellaneous information with little or no regard for its bearing on the main idea of his article. Such neglect of the principle of selection is a defect of the most fundamental kind; it defeats the prime object of common-sense writing—the communication of ideas.

Objection might be raised to the foregoing criticism on the ground that not much information could be given in so brief an article; that, to take a specific example, a satisfactory account of the character of different lenses would alone require several thousand words. Well and good. But brevity does not relieve the writer from the obligation of giving the essentials of his subject; nor do completeness and adequacy wholly depend on length. The briefer the article, the more need for selection. In the case before us,

detailed explanation is impossible—and unnecessary. The author might have gone to work in such a way as this:

> . . . Is it your desire to take pictures of subjects in rapid motion? —athletic sports, children at play, hurrying crowds on a city street, speeding motor-boats, a kitten playing with a ball of yarn? If so, you will want an f/4.5 anastigmat lens (you can learn the full meaning of that term later on, if you care to; meanwhile, take my word for it that it means "speed") and a focal-plane shutter. With that combination, and bright sunlight, you can snap a bucking broncho or a circus lady jumping through a hoop in one one-thousandth of a second. There will be no blur in your picture . . .
>
> Or will your chief interest be in landscapes and buildings? . . .

To insure completeness within the limits of his work, whether broad or narrow, the writer should go over his composition with this question in mind: "Have I said what is absolutely necessary to a right understanding of my idea?" He should try to see his work from the point of view of someone else. In cases of exceptional importance, or of genuine doubt, he should seek someone else's opinion. Any frank and intelligent person will serve the purpose, for the question asked him will be no more technical than this—"Is what I say perfectly clear to you as it stands?"

Unity in the beginning of a composition. Rejection of the irrelevant is especially important in the beginning of a composition. "Most lecturers on music," writes Thoreau, "preface their remarks with a history of music. As well begin a lecture on virtue with a history of virtue." Sometimes a writer approaches his subject bashfully, or hesitates like a man about to dive into icy water. It is part of the stock in trade of amateur writers who strive to be "literary" to begin with something only distantly related to the topic in hand. Set, formal introductions are apt to be perfunctory and mechanical, and rarely throw any light on the

subject. The chief usefulness of such introductions is in helping the writer warm up to his work. So far they may be valuable; only, let them be stricken out on revision. The following passage introduces an account of an adventure with a bear:

Frank Harris, a student at Thiel College, North Liberty, Pennsylvania, was sitting with three of his companions in his room overlooking the front of the beautiful campus that surrounded the college buildings. The hour was seven o'clock in the evening. The young men had just come from the landing in front of the boys' dormitory where they had bid farewell to their fellow students who had left on the evening stage for the station four miles away to board the train that would take them to their homes for the Christmas vacation.

Accordingly South Hall was almost deserted. An entertainment in the town, however, had detained a few others besides Harris and his three friends.

The naturally buoyant spirits of the young men soon began to increase in the joyous anticipation of the approaching entertainment. Jack Brittain, who was sitting near the window, his long legs resting comfortably across the back of a chair, related a somewhat extensive account of the manner in which he expected to spend his vacation. His two friends, John Vogel and Roy Black, in turn, spoke of how anxious they were to see their friends at home, and of the round of pleasure and enjoyment that they were sure would soon be theirs.

"How do you expect to spend your vacation, Harris?" asked young Brittain, for he knew that the parents and relatives of his chum lived in Montana.

"Oh, I guess I shall be obliged to find enjoyment in solitude," replied Harris, somewhat moodily.

At this juncture a step was heard in the hallway. There was a light tap at the door, and in answer to the summons to enter, the door opened and the postman with a number of letters stood without.

When the door had been closed, Harris hastily broke the seal of one of the letters. It was from his friend, Warren Cook, of Tionesta. As he read, his face beamed with pleasure, and when he had finished he said joyously:

"My friend, Cook, is going on a bear-hunting expedition, and has invited me to spend my vacation with him. He is expecting me tomorrow evening."

Accordingly, the following day Harris accompanied his friends to the station, but he left on the northbound train, while his chums went southward.

After an unusually delightful journey of about fifty miles, amid mountain scenes of exquisite beauty and grandeur, he arrived at the smug little station just on the edge of a dense forest. Cook was there to greet him, having driven to the station, because he lived about three miles from the little village. On the way home Cook related his plans for the hunt.

These slow preliminaries leave the bear-hunt still untouched. The trouble is partly a fault in proportion—an over-long dwelling on matters of minor importance; partly a lack of unity—the inclusion of irrelevant material. The main point of the story is an incident in which a wounded bear trees one of the boys. How many of the statements in the passage quoted have any close relation to this incident? With the change of a few words this introduction would do just as well for the beginning of an account of a vacation spent peacefully in Philadelphia or Baltimore. "Begin at the beginning" is sound advice. This narrative might well commence when the hunters strike the trail of the bear—at any rate, the story need not go back of the day on which the adventure occurs.

The safe rule is to see that the opening sentences are unmistakably related to the main idea. Begin as close to the main idea as possible without omitting statements necessary to an understanding of what follows. An introduction ought to get the reader started and not merely keep him marking time. Observe how direct and to the point is this opening paragraph of a well-written short story:

On a fragrant night of June a great change reached its climax in the heart of Cretheus, and he determined to renounce the

world. Having donned a robe belonging to one of his slaves, he walked for the last time through his great and splendid house, in order to bid a contemptuous farewell to all its beauties. The door-porter inquired at what hour the master would return. "Never," Cretheus answered, and went down through his gardens into the wicked city.[1]

Observe, too, how the author of an essay on "The Substance of Poetry" opens up his subject in the first paragraph:

Poetry, as a form of utterance distinct from prose, is simply music in words—an attempt to create beauty in rhythm and tone. Its sole distinguishing characteristic is its harmonization of syllables in rhythm. There is no such thing as a poetic idea. Whatever claims they may advance to the contrary, poets have no monopoly on imagination, sentiment, or tropes. These belong equally to prose, and they characterize any good creative writing.[2]

Such beginnings as these are strictly relevant and in accord with the principle of selection.

Unity in the conclusion of a composition. The conclusion should not be something tacked on at the end. It is, properly, as integral a part of a composition as any other. The principle of selection is violated when material leading elsewhere is put in at the end of a composition; such material may grow out of what has preceded, but it leads the mind away from the central idea. Sometimes a final flourish is indulged in, as though to magnify the importance of a piece of writing by tying it to larger issues than those dealt with in the body of the work. "End with something important" is a good maxim, for the final sentences are in a prominent position; but the "something important" ought to be closely related to the main idea.

[1]Stephen French Whitman, "Cretheus and the Lions," *The American Mercury*, March, 1924.
[2]John McClure, *The American Mercury*, May, 1924.

The following extract shows both the opening up of a new field of thought in the conclusion and the final magnifying flourish:

> Therefore we see very clearly how dependent the college is upon the preparatory school for its very existence, financial, intellectual, athletic. Were we deprived of the preparatory school, nearly everyone would of necessity become illiterate and uncultured, and of course the college, in four years at the most, would succumb to its fate. Perhaps if people saw that there were no more preparatory schools, and therefore no more colleges, and consequently no more chance to educate their children, they would cease having children. The human race would die out, and thus one of the greatest evils imaginable—the nonhabitation of the earth—would be wrought.

The writer should have stopped at the end of the first sentence, which sums up concisely the main idea of his paper. But his subject is quite dwarfed by the direful possibility he suggests in the final sentences. Instead of rounding out the composition and enforcing the central idea, such a conclusion distracts attention from what has previously been said.

Digressions. The mind is prone to wander when we sit down to write; one thought suggests another, which suggests a third, and so on, each related to its neighbors but not necessarily relevant to the subject. Conscious mental effort is often required to check this tendency. "An author should consider," writes Lowell, "how largely the art of writing consists in knowing what to leave in the inkstand." Digressions break the continuity of thought; and if they are extended to any length, are seriously distracting. Most of us have a preference for writing that keeps moving forward toward some goal. And if the progress of a story in which we are interested is held up while the writer discourses of things but remotely connected with it, we are apt to find the digression tedious or annoying. It is but common

sense that we should avoid, as writers, what we object to as readers.

A quotation from Poe's essay on *The Rationale of Verse* will show how easily a writer may slip away from his subject.[1] He has been pointing out the lack of an adequate treatise on English verse:

. . . Nor am I aware of even one of our grammars which so much as properly defines the word "versification" itself. "Versification," says a work now before me, of which the accuracy is far more than usual—the "English Grammar" of Goold Brown—"Versification is the art of arranging words into lines of correspondent length, so as to produce harmony by the regular alternation of syllables differing in quantity." The commencement of this definition might apply, indeed, to the *art* of versification, but not to versification itself. Versification is not the art of arranging, etc., but the actual arranging—a distinction too obvious to need comment. The error here is identical with one which has been too long permitted to disgrace the initial page of every one of our school grammars. I allude to the definitions of English grammar itself. "English grammar," it is said, "is the art of speaking and writing the English language correctly." This phraseology, or something essentially similar, is employed, I believe, by Bacon, Miller, Fisk, Greenleaf, Ingersoll, Kirkland, Cooper, Flint, Pue, Comly, and many others. These gentlemen, it is presumed, adopted it without examination from Murray, who derived it from Lily (whose work was *quamsolam Regia Majestas in omnibus scholis docendam praecipit*), and who appropriated it without acknowledgement, but with some unimportant modification, from the Latin Grammar of Leonicenus. It may be shown, however, that this definition, so complacently received, is not, and cannot be, a proper definition of English grammar. A definition is that which so describes its objects as to distinguish it from all others; it is no definition of any one thing if its terms are applicable to any one other. But if it be asked: "What is the design—the end—the aim of English grammar?" our obvious answer is: "The art of speaking and writing the English language correctly"—that is to say, we must use the precise words employed as the definition of English

[1]In his best tales and poems Poe permits no digression whatsoever.

grammar itself. But the object to be attained by any means is, assuredly, not the means. English grammar and the end contemplated by English grammar are two matters sufficiently distinct; nor can the one be more reasonably regarded as the other than a fishing-hook as a fish. The definition, therefore, which is applicable in the latter instance, *cannot*, in the former, be true. Grammar, in general, is the analysis of language; English Grammar of the English.

But to return to Versification as defined in our extract above . . .

Poe turns to a faulty definition of "grammar" as an illustration of the defect he finds in definitions of "versification." Had he kept this illustration within bounds, there would have been no digression. Instead, he pursues the subject of the definition of grammar, making statements that have nothing to do with the definition of versification or anything else directly connected with his subject. This is digression pure and simple; Murray, Lily, and Leonicenus have not the remotest bearing on the main idea of the essay.

There are writings which are frankly and purposely digressive. The author intentionally ignores the ordinary advantages of unity and deals with a variety of topics, related or otherwise. The rambling personal essay is a good type of such writing. Well done, it is pleasing and intimate, bringing the reader into a semi-conversational relation with the writer. What is lost in unity is compensated for by wit, keen observation, and an apparently artless revelation of the writer's engaging personality. But such writing is flat and tedious if it does not flow naturally from a full mind. It is not so easy as it may seem and is quite beyond the abilities of most beginners. Certainly it is no model for the ordinary student of composition. When he has learned to do a thoroughly businesslike piece of work it may then be time for him to try his hand at an *Autocrat of the Breakfast Table* paper.

EXERCISES

1. What is the main idea of "'Movie' Manners and Morals" (page 169)?

2. What is the main idea of "The Death of the Dauphin" (page 320)?

3. What seems to be the most important idea in the following letter to a newspaper? Rewrite, with this idea in mind, omitting all irrelevant statements.

An Appeal

The exhibition of Mr. Brown's fine paintings of the Acropolis has awakened a general desire to secure these art treasures for X University.

If everyone who would be benefited by this acquisition would contribute a dollar, the sum required would soon be raised. It would be too miserable a manifestation of the pauper spirit if we wait until some millionaire will give us the money. And I would especially direct my appeal on this matter to the Democrats, who have, to say the very least, during the past thirty years derived quite as much benefit from X University as the party whose members have made the most generous contributions to its funds. I read in the morning paper a complaint that our school committee is managed too much in the interest of the Republican party. That has certainly not been the case with X. For many years it had a Democratic President.

President Jones was an admirable administrator; but, as a Free Trader and Free Silver advocate, he failed to gain the pecuniary sympathy of those who had hitherto contributed to the funds of this institution. During the whole of President Jones's administration I anxiously looked for some evidence that the Democrats whose relatives profited by the influence of X University were also willing to contribute to it funds, but came reluctantly to the conclusion that they were as little inclined to make personal sacrifices for so good an object as the great heroes of their New York party, from Boss Tweed all the way to Boss Croker, were willing to do in New York State.

Immediately after my arrival in the States, in 1872, I was the guest, at Washington, of an independent Republican, who

thought (as now all who understand American history must think) that Charles Francis Adams would make a better President than General Grant.

He hoped for the support of the better element in the Democratic party but at the Cincinnati Convention the blackmailers outvoted him, and nominated a candidate, who, though he was a genuine philanthropist and an excellent newspaper manager, would have made a worse President than General Grant, and, like the wounded fox in Aesop's Fables, who, when the hedgehog offered to relieve him of the flies which were feeding on his open sores, replied: "It is useless; they will only be replaced by a hungrier set," the majority of the American people preferred to endure the ills they had, rather than to fly to the unknown horrors of a Greeley-cum-Tammany administration.

We are now on the eve of a presidential election, and have to vote, not for the special interests of one state, but for those of the whole republic. We do not know at present any better candidate than President Blank, and we are sure that he, without the blackmailers that attach themselves to every prosperous cause, will be a much better President than he would be if he were obliged to purchase his reëlection by concessions to those blackmailers.

Will not the Democrats help us in this?—to elect one able and trustworthy man, unhampered by the horde of pelf and place hunters who look upon every general election as an occasion to reap a rich harvest of spoils.

4. Point out any lack of unity in the criticism of *The Witching Hour* (page 6).

5. What merit has the following paragraph as the beginning of an essay?

The subject of this essay is not the so-called Liberty of the Will, so unfortunately opposed to the misnamed doctrine of Philosophical Necessity; but Civil, or Social Liberty: the nature and limits of the power which can be legitimately exercised by society over the individual. A question seldom stated, and hardly ever discussed, in general terms, but which profoundly influences the practical controversies of the age by its latent presence, and is likely soon to make itself recognized as the vital question of the future. It is so far from being new that,

in a certain sense, it has divided mankind almost from the remotest ages; but in the stage of progress into which the more civilized portions of the species have now entered, it presents itself under new conditions, and requires a different and more fundamental treatment.[1]

6. Write the opening paragraph of a composition on one of the following subjects. Compare what you have written with that done by other members of the class.

(*a*) Modern Improvements in Farming
(*b*) The Care of an Automobile
(*c*) The Economic Value of Birds
(*d*) Learning to Swim
(*e*) The Art of Housekeeping
(*f*) Buying Books
(*g*) Training for Football
(*h*) Trench Warfare
(*i*) Modern Rifles
(*j*) Keeping in Good Health

7. Bring to class an introductory paragraph, preferably taken from a magazine article, that really prepares the reader for what is to follow. Explain why you think the paragraph is efficient.

8. What merit has the last sentence of the following brief composition as a conclusion to the paragraph?

Walking through the Lee farm swamp, a dozen or more rods from the river, I found a large box trap closed. I opened it and found in it the remains of a gray rabbit, skin, bones, and mold closely fitting the right-angled corner of one side. It was wholly inoffensive, as so much vegetable mold, and must have been dead some years. None of the furniture of the trap remained, only the box itself; the stick which held the bait, the string, etc., were all gone. The box had the appearance of having been floated off in an upright position by a freshet. It had been a rabbit's living tomb. He had gradually starved to death in it. What a tragedy to have occurred within a box in one of our quiet swamps! The trapper lost his box, the rabbit its life. The box had not been gnawed. After days and nights of moaning and struggle, heard for a few rods through the swamp, increasing weakness and emaciation and delirium, the rabbit breathed its last. They tell you of opening the tomb and finding, by the contortions of the body, that it was buried

[1]John Stuart Mill, *Civil Liberty*.

alive. This was such a case. Let the trapping boy dream of the dead rabbit in its ark, as it sailed, like a small meeting-house with its rude spire, with a grand and solemn motion, far amid the alders.[1]

9. Write the concluding paragraph of a composition on the subject chosen in Exercise 6, page 40.

10. The following extract is from an account of a murder committed in London in 1812, when all but one of the Marr household were killed. Point out all the sentences that seem to you digressive.

The household of Marr, consisting of five persons, is as follows: First, there is himself, who, if he should happen to be ruined in a limited commercial sense, has energy enough to jump up again, like a pyramid of fire, and soar high above ruin many times repeated. Yes, poor Marr, so it might be if thou wert left to thy native energies unmolested; but even now there stands on the other side of the street one born of hell who puts his peremptory negative on all these flattering prospects. Second in the list of this household stands his pretty and amiable wife; who is happy after the fashion of youthful wives, for she is only twenty-two, and anxious (if at all) only on account of her darling infant. For, thirdly, there is in a cradle, not quite nine feet below the street, viz., in a warm, cosy kitchen, and rocked at intervals by the young mother, a baby eight months old. Nineteen months have Marr and herself been married; and this is their first-born child. Grieve not for this child, that it must keep the deep rest of Sunday in some other world; for wherefore should an orphan, steeped to the lips in poverty when once bereaved of father and mother, linger upon an alien and a murderous earth? Fourthly, there is a stoutish boy, an apprentice, say thirteen years old—a Devonshire boy, with handsome features, such as most Devonshire youths have; satisfied with his place; not overworked; treated kindly, and aware that he was treated kindly, by his master and mistress. Fifthly, and lastly, bringing up the rear of this quiet household, is a servant girl, a grown-up young woman; and she, being particularly kind-hearted, occupied (as often happens in families of humble pretensions as to rank) a

[1] Thoreau, *Journal*.

sort of sisterly place in her relation to her mistress. A great democratic change is at this very time (1854), and has been for twenty years, passing over British society. Multitudes of persons are becoming ashamed of saying "my master" or "my mistress"; the term now in the slow process of superseding it is "my employer." Now, in the United States, such an expression of democratic hauteur, though disagreeable as a needless proclamation of independence which nobody is disputing, leaves, however, no lasting bad effect. For the domestic "helps" are pretty generally in a state of transition so sure and rapid to the headship of domestic establishments belonging to themselves that in effect they are but ignoring, for the present moment, a relation which would at any rate dissolve itself in a year or two. But in England, where no such resources exist of everlasting surplus lands, the tendency of the change is painful. It carries with it a sullen and a coarse expression of immunity from a yoke which was in any case a light one, and often a benign one. In some other place I will illustrate my meaning.

11. Point out a slight digression in the paragraph quoted in Exercise 5, page 39.

II. Adaptation

The working principle. *Adapt your work to your readers.* A given fact may be relevant to the subject and yet, for one reason or another be inappropriate for the readers whom one is addressing. This will be made clearer if we return for a moment to the article quoted on page 29. If the article is intended for readers who know so little about the subject that they can derive any fresh information from the paragraph on the folding roll film camera, then the paragraph on the view camera is futile—it takes so much information for granted that it would mean little to such readers. The two paragraphs are incongruous.

The need of adaptation. Neglect of the principle of adaptation is a common cause of failure among the inexperienced. Many a college theme, otherwise satisfactory,

falls short because its author takes for granted either too much or too little. Two quotations from a theme on "The Theory of Rifle-Shooting," in many respects excellent, will help to make the point clear. The theme begins with an accurate statement of the action of gravitation:

> When a bullet comes out at the end of a rifle barrel, it is acted upon by three different forces—the propelling force of the expanding powder gases, the resistance of the air through which it is driven, and the force of gravity.
>
> Even as far back as the time of Ptolemy there was a vague idea of a force pulling toward the center of the earth, but it is owing to the experiments of Sir Isaac Newton that we know exactly how this force works. Terrestrial gravitation compels all unsupported bodies to fall immediately toward the center of the earth in a straight line. Among all the laws of nature it is unique, because it is absolutely unmodified by any cause or any change in conditions. Changes of temperature have no effect upon gravitation, nor has rapid motion; not even the most rapidly moving bodies of the solar system show any change either in the direction or amount of their gravitation toward one another as result of their great rate of speed. It has been found from experiment that a body falls a distance of sixteen feet during the first second, and that during the second second it falls four times that space, or sixty-four feet, and so on. No matter how short the time, there must be some drop. Therefore the bullet begins to fall the moment it is no longer supported by the rifle barrel. This fact will rid our minds of the mistaken idea that a bullet travels in a straight line. It would travel so were it not for gravitation, which begins to pull it downward the moment it is free. The forward movement of the bullet does not interfere with the drop; it simply carries the bullet over a certain space while it is falling earthward . . .

So far, it appears that the reader of this paper needs to be instructed in elementary matters. If he does not know that unsupported bodies "fall immediately toward the center of the earth in a straight line," and needs to be told that the path of a bullet is not a straight line, it may be taken for granted that he knows little of physics and

even less of rifle-shooting. Certainly the writer seems to be acting on these assumptions. It is therefore surprising to find such a passage as the following in the latter part of the theme:

> An elongated bullet requires the rotary motion which is given to it by the grooves of the barrel to steady its flight. Long bullets need more rotary motion, or a quicker twist to the rifling, than short ones, for the air has more surface upon which to act. If the twist is not sufficient, the bullet may wabble or even keyhole. As long as the bullet can take the rifling and is not forced out across the lands, a quick twist is the more desirable. If two bullets are of the same length but of different calibers, the larger will require less rotation to keep it steady, because its radius of gyration is larger . . .

There has been nothing in the theme to explain "keyhole," "lands," and "radius of gyration." Can this passage, then, be intended for the person for whom the former was written? If he is presumed to need instruction in the elements of the law of gravitation and then, a few moments later, is presumed to understand what the "radius of gyration" is, we may remark with the French lord in *All's Well That Ends Well* that "on the reading it he changed almost into another man." Obviously the student who wrote this essay had no clear idea of a definite audience. Probably he was writing it for "just anybody." The result is that he does not satisfy the reasonable demands of any one class of readers.

How adaptation shapes the treatment of a subject. Readers should be given consideration. As a general rule the entire method of handling a subject should hinge on the kind of readers expected. What is suited to one class of readers may be totally unsuited to another class. An article that makes good reading in *The Churchman* might not make good reading in *The Saturday Evening Post.* An

explanation, clear to biologists, of Bateson's hypothesis that evolution may have taken place through the loss of inhibiting factors, might not be clear to a class in elementary zoölogy. Plainly, sensible writers will take such facts as these into account, will consider their readers.

Let us see how the principle of adaptation might affect the treatment of some very ordinary subject—the dirt tennis-court, for example. For our purpose it will be sufficient to distinguish three broad groups of possible readers: (1) experts; (2) those who are interested but whose knowledge is not extensive; (3) those whose interest must be aroused. The group of experts would comprise skillful players, men who make a business of building courts, and those who have charge of fine courts. The player would be interested in a treatment of the subject which dealt, for instance, with the effects of practicing on a dirt court in preparation for tournament play on turf. The builder probably would like to read of a new method of construction that gave adequate drainage at less expense than the methods he had been using. The superintendent or board of governors of a country club might like to know of an improved system of up-keep. In the second group would be found the man who wishes to build a court for himself; he would like to know how to make a satisfactory court at moderate cost, or what advantages a dirt court has over a turf court for home play, and so on. In the third group, among many others, would be the man with a roomy yard and a family of children; his interest might be aroused if he were shown how desirable and feasible it would be to have a court made for them. These suggestions by no means include all the possible angles from which even so humdrum a subject may be approached, but they show that consideration of the audience does shape and define the treatment given to a subject.

There follow two passages dealing with the inequalities of Wordsworth's poetry. The first is intended for students taking a general course in the history of English literature; the second, for mature readers with a cultivated taste for poetry. The manner and treatment of each has been shaped by regard for the intended audience.

I

We cannot open a volume of Wordsworth with the assurance that our ears will be delighted by his melodious and graceful verses or our spirits be uplifted by a poet's inspiration. He is not always a melodious poet, and but seldom a graceful one; his inspiration is only occasional. When he is at his best, not many English poets can bear comparison with him; but when his inspiration deserts him, his verse becomes wooden and prosy—sometimes to an extraordinary degree. Furthermore, because he lacks a sense of humor he sometimes does not see the line that divides the sublime from the ridiculous and produces such an absurdity as the grieving jackass in "Peter Bell."

Because of the great unevenness in his work it is best to begin reading Wordsworth in a book of selections. Our first approach to him should be through the exquisite shorter poems, with their lines of haunting beauty that will remain always fresh and gracious in our memory. Thus we come to understand that Wordsworth is the greatest poet of nature that English literature has produced.

II

Those who wish to understand his influence, and experience his peculiar savor, must bear with patience the presence of an alien element in Wordsworth's work, which never coalesced with what is really delightful in it, nor underwent his special power. Who that values his writings most has not felt the intrusion there, from time to time, of something tedious and prosaic? Of all poets equally great, he would gain most by a skillfully-made anthology. Such a selection would show, in truth, not so much what he was, or to himself or others seemed to be, as what, by the more energetic and fertile quality in his writings, he was ever tending to become. And the mixture in his work, as it actually stands, is so perplexed that one fears to miss the least promising composition even, lest some precious morsel should be lying hidden within—

the few perfect lines, the phrase, the single word perhaps, to which he often works up mechanically through a poem, almost the whole of which may be tame enough. He who thought that in all creative work the larger part was given passively, to the recipient mind, who waited so dutifully upon the gift, to whom so large a measure was sometimes given, had his times also of desertion and relapse; and he has permitted the impress of these, too, to remain in his work. And this duality there—the fitfulness with which the higher qualities manifest themselves in it—gives the effect in his poetry of a power not altogether his own, or under his control, which comes and goes when it will, lifting or lowering a matter, poor in itself; so that that old fancy which made the poet's art an enthusiasm, a form of divine possession, seems almost literally true of him.

One does not have to be a literary critic to see how ill adapted the second passage would be if it were substituted for the first in the pages of an elementary textbook.[1]

Taking the reader's point of view. It is the willingness to see things from the other person's point of view that counts in applying the principle of adaptation. Sometimes there are very serious obstacles to overcome in applying the principle; and there are men who do not succeed in overcoming them. Such a man was the Reverend Amos Barton, in George Eliot's *Scenes of Clerical Life.* One of his uncongenial duties was to preach at the village workhouse. After describing the mentally and morally undeveloped paupers who faced the Reverend Amos from the front row, George Eliot continues:

And now, eke out an audience of which this front benchful was a sample . . . and I think you will admit that the university-taught clergyman, whose office it is to bring home the gospel to a handful of such souls, has a sufficiently hard task. For, to have any chance of success, short of miraculous intervention, he must

[1]For fuller illustrations of the ways in which adaptation will affect treatment in all its aspects, the student should seek more extensive examples than space will allow here. Compare *Hamlet* and Lamb's adaptation of the play in *Tales from Shakespeare;* a chapter of *The Origin of Species* with one of Huxley's *Three Lectures on Evolution;* a school edition of *Julius Caesar* with Furness's *New Variorum* edition.

bring his geographical, chronological, exegetical mind pretty nearly to the pauper point of view or of no view; he must have some conception of the mode in which the doctrines that have so much vitality in . . . his own brain will comport themselves . . . in a brain that is neither geographical, chronological, nor exegetical. It is a flexible imagination that can take such a leap as that, and an adroit tongue that can adapt its speech to so unfamiliar a position. The Rev. Amos Barton had neither that flexible imagination nor that adroit tongue. . . . This very morning, the first lesson was the twelfth chapter of *Exodus*, and Mr. Barton's exposition turned on unleavened bread. Nothing in the world more suited to the simple understanding than instruction through familiar types and symbols! But there is always this danger attending it, that the interest or comprehension of your hearers may stop short precisely at the point where your . . . interpretation begins. And Mr. Barton this morning succeeded in carrying the pauper imagination to the dough-tub, but unfortunately was not able to carry it upward from that well-known object to the unknown truths it was intended to shadow forth.

Unquestionably some of the problems of adaptation call for the highest degree of insight, of sympathetic imagination, of knowledge of human nature. One does not gain these qualities from textbooks or courses in composition, but from ripening experience of life, from the persistence that enables one to profit by his failures, and from the self-criticism that holds him to nothing less good than his best.

But the great majority of problems in adaptation are not too difficult for an ordinary writer to solve. He is quite capable of distinguishing broadly between readers who know little or nothing of a subject and those who have a considerable knowledge of it, or between those who are mentally acute and well trained and those whose understanding is slow and halting. To adapt his work to such broad classes as these is well within any sensible person's power. The willingness to make such distinctions and to keep them in mind while writing is the essential thing.

EXERCISES

1. Show how the principle of adaptation might modify the treatment of one or more of these general subjects: The Submarine; College Fraternities; The Game of Baseball; Prohibition; Compulsory Vaccination; The San Francisco Earthquake; The Panama Canal; Labor Unions; Growing Rice in Texas; Whittier as a Representative Poet of New England; Free Verse; Modern Movements in Art.

2. Write two short papers on the same topic, one of them addressed to readers who have approximately as much information about the subject as you have, the other addressed to those who have much less.

3. The three poems that follow differ in the breadth of their appeal. In your opinion which one would be understood best by the largest number of readers?—which one by the smallest? Why? Considering substance only, not form, what limits the breadth of appeal of the two less popular poems?

The Rhodora

In May, when sea-winds pierced our solitudes,
I found the fresh Rhodora in the woods
Spreading its leafless blooms in a damp nook,
To please the desert and the sluggish brook.
The purple petals fallen in the pool
Made the black water with their beauty gay;
Here might the red-bird come his plumes to cool,
And court the flower that cheapens his array.
Rhodora! if the sages ask thee why
This charm is wasted on the earth and sky,
Tell them, dear, that if eyes were made for seeing,
Then Beauty is its own excuse for being.
Why thou wert there, O rival of the rose!
I never thought to ask, I never knew;
But, in my simple ignorance, suppose
The selfsame Power that brought me there brought you.[1]

[1]Emerson.

The Spires of Oxford

I saw the spires of Oxford
  As I was passing by—
The gray spires of Oxford,
  Against a pearl-gray sky.
My heart was with the Oxford men
  Who went abroad to die.

The years go fast in Oxford,
  The golden years and gay.
The hoary colleges look down
  On careless boys at play.
But when the bugles sounded war
  They put their games away.

They left the peaceful river,
  The cricket-field, the quad,
The shaven lawns of Oxford
  To seek a bloody sod—
They gave their merry youth away
  For country and for God.

God rest you, happy gentlemen,
  Who laid your good lives down,
Who took the khaki and the gun
  Instead of cap and gown.
God bring you to a fairer place
  Than even Oxford town.[1]

Philomela

Hark! ah, the nightingale—
The tawny-throated!
Hark, from that moonlit cedar what a burst!
What triumph! hark!—what pain!

O wanderer from a Grecian shore,
Still, after many years, in distant lands,

[1]Winifred M. Letts.

Still nourishing in thy bewildered brain
That wild, unquenched, deep-sunken, old-world pain—
Say, will it never heal?
And can this fragrant lawn
With its cool trees, and night,
And the sweet, tranquil Thames,
And moonshine, and the dew,
To thy racked heart and brain
Afford no balm?

Dost thou tonight behold,
Here, through the moonlight on this English grass,
The unfriendly palace in the Thracian wild?
Dost thou again peruse
With hot cheeks and seared eyes
The too clear web, and thy dumb sister's shame?
Dost thou once more assay
Thy flight, and feel come over thee,
Poor fugitive, the feathery change
Once more, and once more seem to make resound
With love and hate, triumph and agony,
Lone Daulis, and the high Cephissian vale?
Listen, Eugenia—
How thick the bursts come crowding through the leaves!
Again—thou hearest?
Eternal passion!
Eternal Pain![1]

4. Was the explanation of the method of casting in bronze (page 137) written for readers familiar with the process? Give the reasons for your answer.

5. Show specifically how Huxley has adapted his explanation of inductive and deductive reasoning (page 156) to the needs of a popular audience.

6. Suggest means of adapting the "Ascent of the Weisshorn" (Appendix, page 644) to a more popular audience than Tyndall was writing for.

[1]Matthew Arnold.

III. Arrangement

The working principle. *Arrange the parts of a composition in a natural or logical order, keeping related statements together.*

A piece of writing which does not move onward toward some goal which the writer has set for himself is in general vastly inferior to one in which there is progress in a definite direction fixed upon from the beginning; we say that it has no point, that it arrives nowhere, and that in the end the reader, for all his trouble, is about where he was at the beginning. Thus a confused writer makes an exasperated reader. Now the essence of the principle of arrangement is order as opposed to confusion; method as opposed to chance. The writer has an end in view. He surveys the terrain and lays out a route. If there are obstacles in the way, he discovers how to overcome them. Then, having a practicable trail, he invites others to use it and helps them as best he can to reach the proposed destination.

Sequence of sentences. In the actual process of composition a writer would undoubtedly attend to the sequence of the larger units of his work before he gave any attention to the sequence of his sentences. Here we shall consider sequence of sentences first because certain fundamentals of arrangement can be most completely illustrated and most quickly grasped in the case of the smallest units.

(1) *For clearness.* Orderly arrangement of sentences is an essential of clearness. Without such order, the individual sentences, no matter how well constructed, are as unsatisfying to the mind as the scattered parts of a picture-puzzle. The difference in intelligibility between a paragraph in which the sentences do not stand in some appreciable relation to one another and a paragraph in which they do, is illustrated in the following examples:

(A)

A few tall trees out in the open lift their heads above its surface. The fellow has passed camp during the night. A dreary breakfast and we are glad to get under way. Elephants are very numerous in Indo-China, but, owing to the thick jungle they inhabit, it is extremely difficult to get them, unless you are so fortunate as to catch them in the open early or late. Dawn has just broken and the mist lies black and heavy over the forest. So I must ask my reader to step with me for a moment into the jungle and to picture himself regretfully crawling out of bed into the pitch darkness of a cold, misty morning. This is especially true in the dry season. They come out to the watering holes during the night but usually beat a hasty retreat to the cool of the forest at the first sign of day. It is wet and the cold, clammy dew soaks us to the skin. They are the trees of a dream, weird and unsupported, and their great black trunks disappear into the blacker mist below. We see fresh tiger tracks. The trail leads a way through the accursed elephant grass.

(B)

Elephants are very numerous in Indo-China, but, owing to the thick jungle they inhabit, it is extremely difficult to get them, unless you are so fortunate as to catch them in the open early or late. They come out to the watering holes during the night but usually beat a hasty retreat to the cool of the forest at the first sign of day. This is especially true in the dry season. So I must ask my reader to step with me for a moment into the jungle and to picture himself crawling out of bed into the pitch darkness of a cold, misty morning. A dreary breakfast and we are glad to get under way. Dawn has just broken and the mist lies black and heavy over the forest. A few tall trees out in the open lift their heads above its surface. They are the trees of a dream, weird and unsupported, and their great black trunks disappear into the blacker mist below. The trail leads a way through the accursed elephant grass. It is wet and the cold, clammy dew soaks us to the skin. We see fresh tiger tracks. The fellow has passed camp during the night.[1]

[1]Douglas Burden, "The Ibex and the Elephant," *Atlantic Monthly*, July, 1924. Used by permission of The Atlantic Monthly Co.

In comparing these paragraphs we observe that in (B) related statements are brought together: the three sentences about elephants stand shoulder to shoulder instead of being separated, as in (A); so, for another instance, do the two sentences about the tiger, or the two sentences that describe the trees. Furthermore, we see that in (B) each statement helps to prepare for what follows, makes it more immediately intelligible. The sentences in (B) are parts of an ordered sequence; they carry the mind along without aimless floundering and guesswork in a direction chosen by the writer. They may be likened to rails laid end to end to form a smooth track for the thought they carry.

(2) *For effectiveness.* But clearness is not the only consideration in the arrangement of sentences within the paragraph. A paragraph may be clear and yet be ineffective because it lacks movement or emphasis, or both. It ought to move onward just as the composition of which it is a part moves onward. And it ought to give emphasis to its most important idea. When it does both these things it is more interesting and more useful than when it does only one of them or neither. The following examples will show the difference between an ineffective sequence and an effective one:

(C)

History contains no more touching instance of military fidelity, or of the influence of a commanding mind. Under the circumstances of a siege, any troops so scantily provided with officers might have been expected to show signs of insurbordination; and the danger was peculiarly great in a force composed of men differing widely from each other in extraction, color, language, manners, and religion. The devotion of the little band to its chief surpassed anything that is related of the Tenth Legion of Caesar, or of the Old Guard of Napoleon. During fifty days the siege went on. The sepoys came to Clive, not to complain of their scanty fare, but to propose that all the grain should be given to the Europeans,

who required more nourishment than the natives of Asia. The breach increased day by day. During fifty days the young captain maintained the defense with a firmness, vigilance, and ability which would have done honor to the oldest marshal in Europe. The thin gruel, the sepoys said, which was strained from the rice, would suffice for themselves. The garrison began to feel the pressure of hunger.

(D)

During fifty days the siege went on. During fifty days the young captain maintained the defense, with a firmness, vigilance, and ability which would have done honor to the oldest marshal in Europe. The breach, however, increased day by day. The garrison began to feel the pressure of hunger. Under such circumstances, any troops so scantily provided with officers might have been expected to show signs of insubordination; and the danger was peculiarly great in a force composed of men differing widely from each other in extraction, color, language, manners, and religion. But the devotion of the little band to its chief surpassed anything that is related of the Tenth Legion of Caesar, or of the Old Guard of Napoleon. The sepoys came to Clive, not to complain of their scanty fare, but to propose that all the grain should be given to the Europeans, who required more nourishment than the natives of Asia. The thin gruel, they said, which was strained from the rice, would suffice for themselves. History contains no more touching instance of military fidelity, or of the influence of a commanding mind.[1]

Example (C) is intelligible, but that is about all that can be said for it. Example (D) shows a great gain in forward movement; its thought does not seesaw back and forth or turn in a circle, but proceeds surely and swiftly to the goal set for it in the last sentence. And as the thought moves on, the reader's interest becomes livelier; for the order is climactic—that is, the details are presented in an order of increasing interest or significance, the most striking being reserved for the end. In (C) the most important details

[1]Macaulay, *Lord Clive*.

are buried in the paragraph, which runs downhill to an anticlimax, a relatively minor detail at the end. Example (D) puts the emphasis where it belongs, on the sepoys' extraordinary devotion and its silent testimony to Clive's "commanding mind." The arrangement leaves no doubt as to what is most memorable.

Sequence of larger units. The same methods, plainly successful in the handling of sentences in (B) and (D), apply to the arrangement of larger units in the composition. These larger units appear when we begin to analyze a subject, to pick it apart as a botanist does a flower to see what it is made up of. Suppose the subject is rose-growing. A little consideration will show us that everything we may have to say about rose-growing can be gathered into groups under such headings as Propagation, Pruning, Treatment of the Soil, etc. And the first step toward a satisfactory arrangement has been taken when these divisions of the main topic have been settled upon.

The second step is to fix the order in which these divisions of the subject are to be presented. Let us compare two of the many possible arrangements of the divisions in a theme on rose-growing:

I	II
1. Protection against winter-killing	1. Locating the rose-bed.
2. Setting out the plants	2. Preparing the soil
3. Formation of new varieties	3. Choosing the plants
4. Locating the rose-bed	4. Setting out the plants
5. Protection against insects	5. Pruning
6. Choosing the plants	6. Protection against insects
7. Methods of propagation	7. Protection against winter-killing
8. Preparing the soil	8. Cultivation in spring
9. Pruning	9. Methods of propagation
10. Cultivation in spring, etc.	10. Formation of new varieties, etc.

A glance is enough to show that, in arrangement, II is superior to I. The succession of topics in I displays no constructive intelligence. In II we recognize at once a sensibly-organized plan that makes continuity or progression of thought possible and visibly bodies forth the unity of the subject-matter. The arrangement in II is a recognition of the fact that certain stages of the process of rose-growing actually succeed one another: that roses are set out in the spring, and will therefore require protection against insects during the summer before they need to be sheltered from the cold of winter; or that the location of the rose-bed is decided on before the soil is prepared. This arrangement is natural. It is logical, too, inasmuch as it takes into account the fact that some knowledge is made useful, or available to the mind, only in the light of other knowledge. For this reason topics 9 and 10 are logically placed after the others; they constitute a further stage in the development of one's knowledge of rose-growing. Certainly a person ignorant of the rudiments of rose culture would not be likely to succeed in originating new hybrids.

Time order. Whenever time enters as a factor in the subject treated, a chronological order may be adopted. In narratives, it is the usual order. In explanations or descriptions of processes in which one operation succeeds another regularly in point of time, as in the making of steel rails or the building of a ship, the time order may be used effectively. This is true also when we are dealing with ideas or objects whose development comes in clearly successive stages. One way of handling such a complicated object as the triple-expansion marine engine is to begin with an early form of engine, relatively simple in construction, and from that work forward to the modern engine, noting developments and improvements in the order in which they actually took place. This method may easily be

abused, however, by being used as a means of showing off historical knowledge rather than as a means of achieving clearness. It should be reserved for cases in which the tracing of simple beginnings to a complex conclusion really makes for greater intelligibility by presenting the fundamentals of a subject in bold relief. While it is probably true that one can more clearly understand the part played by the States in our system of government if he understands the relations of the thirteen colonies to one another at the time when the Union was formed, it is also true, as Thoreau hints in the remark previously quoted, that to begin a lecture on virtue with a history of virtue is pure pedantry.

It is not necessary that the chronological arrangement should be applied throughout the entire composition—and this is true of any other method, as well. In a composition, which as a whole does not follow the time order, it may be well to use the time order in one or more of the divisions.

THE ARTIFICIAL FLY

I. The bass fly
   1. What a bass fly is
   2. How to make a bass fly
   3. How to use a bass fly

II. The trout fly
   1. What a trout fly is
   2. How to make a trout fly
   3. How to use a trout fly

III. The salmon fly
   1. What a salmon fly is
   2. How to make a salmon fly
   3. How to use a salmon fly

In this example the main divisions, I, II, and III, are not in chronological order; but the subdivisions, or parts com-

posing a main division, are in chronological order. In subdivision 1 the reader is told what to make; in 2, how to make it; in 3, how to use it.

Space order. Another widely useful method of arrangement we may call space order, because it is based on the relation of objects to one another in space. A survey of the remains of ancient civilization along the Nile might be laid out on the spatial plan; beginning at Cairo, say, the reader would be taken in imagination from point to point up the river; the pyramids of Gizeh would then be treated before the temple of Osiris at Abydos, not because they are older or more important, but solely because they lie nearer the starting-point and would be seen first by persons going up the Nile. Other uses for space order are numerous —the rooms in a building, the objects in a landscape, the people in a street car, the parts of a gas-engine, the rigging of a ship, the geysers in Yellowstone Park, the exhibitions at a fair, the marchers in a parade, the pictures in a gallery, and so on. We may see space order indicated in the following quotations from A. G. Bradley's *Highways and Byways in the Lake District:*

> Here we must leave our highway to descend into prosaic lowlands, and ourselves turning southward, strike out along a lonely-looking byway that keeps the ridge and leads . . . to Lamplugh. (p. 157.)

> It is near a dozen miles to St. Bees, and for nine of them, as far, that is to say, as Egremont, the road traverses a brick red country scarred by the working of iron ore. (p. 162.)

> It is now but three miles to St. Bees; and it is singular how abruptly one leaves the smoky belt of Cumberland behind, for in ten minutes we are running smoothly down a red lane deep sunk in a rich hollow, fair and fresh, warm and green, as South Devon. (p. 164.)

Logical order. A third important type of order is the logical. The logical relations between facts and ideas may be used to determine the sequence of the parts of a composition, major or minor. As we are here concerned with logic solely in its practical applications to structure, we shall consider only the most generally useful types of logical order.

(1) *General to particular.* In this type of arrangement the writer makes a general statement and then gives details that explain or support it. In substance he says, "This is the theory, and these are the grounds on which it rests"; or "This is the law, and now we shall see what the law means in detail and how it applies in particular cases"; or "My opinion is thus-and-so, and I hold it for the following reasons." This order, perhaps the most generally useful of the logical types, has advantages for writer and reader: the writer must know what he is driving at when he begins to write; the reader is from the beginning aware of the objective and can therefore readily grasp the bearing or significance of details. Formal explanations such as are found in classroom lectures and textbooks frequently use this method; and it is by far the commonest arrangement in legal arguments and in debates. An illustration on a small scale will be found in the quotation from Matthew Arnold on page 87. The structure of a whole composition is indicated in the following extract:

> It will be contended by the plaintiffs that these acts are not valid and binding on them, without their assent—1. Because they are against common right, and the constitution of New Hampshire. 2. Because they are repugnant to the Constitution of the United States.[1]

(2) *Particular to general.* In going from the particular to the general a writer follows the lines of inductive reason-

[1] Daniel Webster, Argument in the Case of the Trustees of Dartmouth College *vs.* Woodward, before the Supreme Court of the United States.

ing by means of which we arrive at general truths or ideas. He says in effect, "These are the facts—taking them all together, they point to this conclusion"; or "My experience, and Y's, and Z's, has been such-and-such, and therefore I believe thus-and-so." The order of general to particular is a process of expansion or unfolding; that of particular to general is one of packing facts together into the compact form of a general statement or conclusion—or, to use Huxley's figure, tying a number of facts into a neat bundle and putting a label on it. The method is illustrated in this passage:

The writer has asked a thousand school children, who from time to time have visited various observatories with which he has been connected: "How many square feet to the acre?" and not once has the correct answer been given. The children guess wildly or stand mortified. He believes he might ask a hundred school-teachers the same question, and if two answered correctly, these could be easily stumped by the further casual inquiry: "And how many square inches, would you say?" Perhaps, gentle reader, you would like to try the problem? You know what an inch is and you know that "acre" is a term quite frequently used.

Of the same groups of children a second question was invariably asked: "How many cents in four hundred thirty-five dollars and sixty cents?" There is a moment of hesitancy, then a flash of recognition, and a jubilant chorus booms forth: "Forty-three thousand five hundred and sixty." They always put the "and" in. They feel that they valiantly met the enemy and got the better of him.

But why this ability to answer so promptly a problem in values, and the complete failure to solve the problem in measuring an area?

Perhaps the explanation is to be found in this. A dollar is a hundred cents; but a link is 7.92 inches, and 625 square links make a pole, and 16 poles make a square chain, and 10 square chains make an acre. So one must multiply 7.92 by 7.92, then multiply this by 625, then multiply by 16, then by 10; and finally divide the total by 144. This gives, if you've made no mistake, 43,560

square feet. If you want the number of square inches, omit dividing by 144, and the answer is: 6,272,640 square inches in an acre.

There are two things to be noticed. We do not use a scientific and sensible unit to begin with; and the method of extension is unscientific, in that there is no constant and easily comprehended ratio of values. . . .[1]

(3) *Cause and effect.* In using this order the writer either sets before us a cause and then points out its result, or states the result and then shows the cause of it. The arrangement has many applications. Something unusual or striking occurs, and immediately many persons ask, "What caused it?" or "What will it lead to?" Explanatory or argumentative articles treating such an event naturally attempt to answer one or both of these questions, and their arrangement, at least in part, is that of cause and effect. A sudden rise or fall in the price of stocks, for instance, calls forth newspaper articles which try to explain the causes. A disastrous earthquake in Japan gives currency to various explanations. Natural phenomena of all kinds give rise to a search for what brought them about:

The traditional explanation of the direction of whirl in terrestrial cyclones, which dates from an early period, is a very simple one. Suppose a region of low pressure to occur at some point in the northern hemisphere. The wind rushing toward the depression from the south carries with it the higher moment of inertia of the atmosphere in the equatorial region, and its velocity must increase and deflect the air to the east of the meridian from which it started. The air descending from the north acquires a lower velocity and is deflected to the west. Hence the left-handed whirl. In the southern hemisphere, as a moment's reflection will show, a right-handed whirl would be produced under similar conditions.[2]

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[1]Alexander McAdie, "How Big Is an Acre?" *Atlantic Monthly*, July, 1924. Used by permission of The Atlantic Monthly Co.

[2]George E. Hale, "Sun-Spots as Magnets," *Scribner's*, May, 1924. Used by permission.

Writers on political subjects frequently use the order of cause and effect: "These highly desirable results will follow if the X party obtains a majority in Congress"; "The passage of this tariff bill will bring about these disastrous consequences." Everyone who reads editorials or listens to political speeches is familiar with the order of cause and effect:

One of the results flowing out from the Democratic National Convention of 1924 is likely to be a revival of the half-forgotten agitation for a uniform, direct, and national presidential preference primary. Another flock of proposed constitutional amendments may appear in Congress. The crusade, headed at various times by Woodrow Wilson, Senator La Follette, Theodore Roosevelt, Hiram Johnson, and Charles Evans Hughes, may take on new life.

A few years ago there was much criticism and considerable distrust of these conventions. Back in 1912 the whole system was under fire.

There had been a forty-six-ballot Democratic deadlock at Baltimore, and Chicago had echoed with charges against the "steamroller." The Democrats turned down Champ Clark at Baltimore after he had shown a majority and had taken Woodrow Wilson. Republicans nominated William Howard Taft in the teeth of a popular gale blowing toward Roosevelt.

The old-fashioned convention was assailed as an extra-legal, boss-controlled, patronage-ruled affair, often unmindful of the will of the party's voters. It was being hammered by means of direct primary laws in a dozen States. . . .[1]

Order of announcement. When neither time order nor space order can be used and there is no compelling logical sequence of parts, the writer may announce at the outset the arrangement which (for whatever reason) he finds convenient. Thus Mrs. Gerould, in an essay on *The Extirpation of Culture*, puts before us the main points of her paper:

[1]Editorial in the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, July 9, 1924. Used by permission of the editor.

If I were asked to give, offhand, the causes of the gradual extirpation of culture among us, I should name the following:

1. The increased hold of the democratic fallacy on the public mind
2. The influx of a racially and socially inferior population
3. Materialism in all classes
4. The idolatry of science

Neither logic nor chronology would have been outraged had she chosen a different arrangement—say the following:

1. The idolatry of science
2. Materialism in all classes
3. The influx of a racially and socially inferior population
4. The increased hold of the democratic fallacy on the public mind

It is not always necessary to state at the beginning of a composition what points will be considered; announcement of each point may be made as it is taken up. It is usually best, however, to tell in the beginning what the main divisions are, as such procedure does make for clearness.

Other methods. The chief aim of the methods of arrangement touched on in the foregoing paragraphs is clearness. Two other aims, interest and persuasiveness, often influence arrangement. To arouse interest a writer may lift one portion of his work from the place in the composition where it would be most easily and quickly understood and put it at the beginning, where it will arrest attention. To sustain interest he will, when coherence allows, arrange his material in an order of increasing interest or importance. These methods will be considered in the chapter on narration. Arrangement for persuasiveness will be dealt with in the chapter on argument. Here it will be sufficient to say that this arrangement consists largely in putting first the points most likely to win the reader's assent or

sympathy, postponing, as far as may be consistent with clearness, arguments liable to arouse his opposition.

Outlines. It is true economy to accustom oneself to planning ahead. Before beginning to write one should know what aspects of his subject he is going to treat, and in what order—for it is easier to plan forward than to plan backward. Unless the composition is to be very short or is to deal with a simple subject that the writer is thoroughly familiar with, he will generally find it convenient to have a written plan. It is advantageous to have the plan actually spread before the eye, because faulty arrangement then becomes more evident. The best form of working-plan for general purposes is the topical outline:

INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATION IN THE HOMERIC PERIOD

I. Hunting and fishing
II. Cattle raising
III. Agriculture
IV. Food and its preparation
V. Manufactures
VI. Trade[1]

This outline includes only the main topics. If the discussion were to be brief, this outline would be sufficient; but if the subject were to be treated more fully, the arrangement of material under each main topic would need to be indicated. Thus I, for example, would be expanded:

I. Hunting and fishing
   1. Not the basis of economic life as among more primitive peoples
   2. Hunting widely practiced for profit and pleasure
   3. Fishing a regular occupation among the common people

If the amount of material under any or all of sub-topics 1, 2, and 3 made it necessary, they would be expanded in the same way by jotting down the topics subordinate to each.[2]

[1]Based on chap. ii of A. G. Keller's *Homeric Society*.
[2]A specialized outline, the "brief," is discussed in the chapter on argument, p. 185.

EXERCISES

1. Improve the order of sentences—which are intentionally disarranged—in the following paragraphs; the sentences are numbered for convenience:

(A)

(1) It is a wholesome thing to enjoy for a time, or for a time each day all through life, sports and active bodily exercise. (2) That is the foundation for everything else, and I hope you will all be that, if you are nothing more. (3) Play must be incidental in a satisfactory life. (4) This being a clean, wholesome, vigorous animal involves a good deal. (5) I hope you are all aiming at the solid, durable satisfactions of life, not primarily the gratifications of this moment or of tomorrow, but the satisfactions that are going to last and grow. (6) Still, none of you would be content with this achievement as the total outcome of your lives. (7) These are legitimate enjoyments, but, if made the main object of life, they tire. (8) For educated men what are the sources of the solid and durable satisfactions of life? (9) A young man ought to be a clean, wholesome, vigorous animal. (10) So far as I have seen, there is one indispensable foundation for the satisfactions of life—health. (11) They cease to be a source of durable satisfaction. (12) It involves not condescending to the ordinary barbaric vices. (13) It is a happy thing to have in youth what are called animal spirits—a very descriptive phrase; but animal spirits do not last even in animals; they belong to the kitten or puppy stage. (14) One must avoid drunkenness, gluttony, licentiousness, and getting into dirt of any kind, in order to be a clean, wholesome, vigorous animal. (15) We have to build everything in this world of domestic joy and professional success, everything of a useful, honorable career, on bodily wholesomeness and vitality.

(B)

(1) Real phrases are not manufactured; they sum up and express great experiences. (2) Such a phrase is that which was used by General Gallieni, "Jusqu'au bout!" (3) Society must be saved in every generation. (4) In all great crises phrases are born. (5) When a year ago he was attacked by a grave illness which a slight operation and a short but immediate rest would

have cured, he declined to drop his work, saying, "A chief must set an example in war time, and go 'jusqu'au bout!' "—that is, to the very end. (6) It is undeniable that there is a downward sag in society, that it is impossible to build society on so strong a basis that it will automatically remain pure and vigorous. (7) Unconsciously or instinctively, as brave men do, the "savior of Paris" not only struck a great note, but announced a great principle of life in those words. (8) It is impossible to capitalize society so strongly that it can rest safely on its accumulated moral strength. (9) It is the men who go "to the very end" who are in every generation the saviors of society; they preserve it from stagnation; they redeem it from corruption.

2. Discuss possible methods of arrangement for several of the subjects given in Exercise 6 (page 40) and Exercise 1 (page 49). (The instructor may deem it advisable to divide the class into groups and to assign to each group a subject for special preparation.)

3. Analyze one of the subjects discussed in 2 above into its main divisions and arrange these in what you consider the most effective order.

4. What order is used in the passage quoted on page 604?

5. Determine the order used in one or more of the selections in the Appendix assigned for such study by your instructor.

6. Make an outline of the essay on Poe reprinted in the Appendix (page 607). Can you suggest any other way of arranging the material in this article?

7. Suggest possible arrangements of material for several of the following subjects and discuss the advantages of each arrangement:

(1) Dry farming
(2) Wireless telegraphy
(3) Medicine as a profession
(4) The country banker
(5) A great novel
(6) Joseph Conrad
(7) The Japanese in California
(8) Restriction of immigration
(9) Woman suffrage in the United States
(10) Operating a radio
(11) Achievements of the Wilson administration
(12) Forest preservation
(13) The manufacture of beet sugar
(14) The development of the airplane
(15) The state universities of the Middle West

IV. Articulation

The working principle. *Make the relationship of the parts of a composition clear and unmistakable.*

The use of articulation. Articulation here signifies the joining or linking together of parts. These phrases suggest that the writer's concern with coherence does not cease when he has fixed and carried out the ordering of his material. In justice to himself and his subject, and out of courtesy to his reader, he should see that the connection between his ideas is plain and unmistakable. This does not mean that he should make a constant parade of the skeleton of his composition or load down his pages with *but's* and *however's* and other elementary means of articulation; but rather that he should indicate relationships, as unobtrusively as circumstances permit, whenever by so doing he can make his work clearer.

The purpose of articulation is to make discourse more intelligible. That is its sole function. It adds nothing to substance and does not alter arrangement. It exists for the sake of immediate clearness. The usefulness of articulation is like the usefulness of a signpost at the crossroads; the business of each is guidance.

Now signposts are most useful when they prevent the traveler from taking the wrong direction and enable him to reach his destination with the least trouble; on a straight road out of which no other roads lead they are of small value. So, too, with writing. If each statement grows directly and inevitably out of the preceding, articulation will take care of itself. But usually it is only in very short compositions which deal with a single aspect of a subject to the exclusion of all others, that all the statements can be made to follow so unmistakable a course. Most of the subjects we write about cannot be handled in such straight-

forward fashion. There are usually several groups of ideas to be dealt with, and each group must be kept distinct from the others, yet linked with them also. That is, means of articulation must be used.

We shall now consider the four most important ways in which articulation may be secured: mechanical means, paragraphing, transitions, and verbal links.

Mechanical means. In long compositions the commonest mechanical means of articulation is division into chapters, each chapter representing a particular phase of the subject as a whole. The chapter-headings make it clear that when we turn from one chapter to another we are entering upon a different phase of the subject. When the chapters are not meant to represent the largest divisions of the subject, this fact is shown by grouping them together into "Books," or "Parts." In Thomas Hardy's *Under the Greenwood Tree*, for example, we find the main divisions of the story indicated as "Part the First: Winter," "Part the Second: Spring," and so on. "Part the First" is then subdivided into nine chapters, each representing a special aspect of that portion of the subject. The divisions of a chapter may in turn be shown by headings, numerals, and changes in type; examples may be found in almost any textbook. This latter practice, however, is usually limited to books intended for study or reference, in which its convenience is felt to outweigh its heavy emphasis on structure. In compositions which do not exceed the length of the average magazine article, mechanical means are rarely used for any purpose except to separate the major divisions. There are three customary ways of doing this: (1) to leave one or two blank lines between divisions; (2) to head each division with its appropriate number (usually in Roman numerals); (3) to give each division a heading, or caption. But in the majority of short compositions mechanical articulation is not used at all.

Paragraphing. (1) *The paragraph a unit.* For the purposes of articulation the important things about a paragraph are that it shall be first of all a unit, and then further, a unit of such convenient size that it can be grasped by the mind, without too much effort, as an entity. The whole significance of the paragraph in modern writing depends upon its unity—upon its being a single stage in the progress of the thought, or a collection of related details, or a series of statements giving rise to one leading thought or impression. That is what the paragraphs mean to us when we are reading sensibly-written modern books.

(2) *Grouping details.* Paragraphing is useful to the reader in so far as it serves to block off, or separate, groups of facts or ideas, each group centering in a complete thought or distinct impression. Rational paragraphing economizes attention by focusing it on a single point or aspect of a subject at a time, with something of the intensifying effect that comes when rays of light converge through a lens. If we examine any passage of good prose, we shall see that the paragraphs do actually block off the details into convenient units:

He descended and came to a small basin of sea inclosed by the cliffs. Troy's nature freshened within him; he thought he would rest and bathe here before going farther. He undressed and plunged in. Inside the cove the water was uninteresting to a swimmer, being smooth as a pond, and to get a little of the ocean swell, Troy presently swam between the two projecting spurs of rock which formed the pillars of Hercules to this miniature Mediterranean. Unfortunately for Troy a current unknown to him existed outside, which . . . was awkward for a swimmer who might be taken in it unawares. Troy found himself carried to the left and then round in a swoop out to sea.

He now recollected the place and its sinister character. Many bathers had there prayed for a dry death from time to time, and, like Gonzalo also, had been unanswered; and Troy began to deem it possible that he might be added to their number. Not a boat

of any kind was at present within sight, but far in the distance Budmouth lay upon the sea, as it were quietly regarding his efforts, and beside the town the harbor showed its position by a dim meshwork of ropes and spars. After well-nigh exhausting himself in attempts to get back to the mouth of the cove, in his weakness swimming several inches deeper than was his wont, keeping up his breathing entirely by his nostrils, turning upon his back a dozen times over, swimming *en papillon*, and so on, Troy resolved as a last resource to tread water at a slight incline and so endeavor to reach the shore at any point, merely giving himself a gentle impetus inward whilst carried on in the general direction of the tide. This, necessarily a slow process, he found to be not altogether so difficult, and though there was no choice of a landing-place—the objects on shore passing by him in a sad and slow procession—he perceptibly approached the extremity of a spit of land yet farther to the right, now well defined against the sunny portion of the horizon. While the swimmer's eyes were fixed upon the spit as his only means of salvation on this side of the Unknown, a moving object broke the outline of the extremity, and immediately a ship's boat appeared, manned with several sailor lads, her bows toward the sea.

All Troy's vigor spasmodically revived to prolong the struggle yet a little further. Swimming with his right arm, he held up his left to hail them, splashing upon the waves, and shouting with all his might. From the position of the setting sun his white form was distinctly visible upon the now deep-hued bosom of the sea to the east of the boat, and the men saw him at once. Backing their oars and putting the boat about, they pulled toward him with a will, and in five or six minutes from the time of his first halloo, two of the sailors hauled him in over the stern.

They formed part of a brig's crew, and had come ashore for sand. Lending him what little clothing they could spare among them as a slight protection against the rapidly cooling air, they agreed to land him in the morning; and without further delay, for it was growing late, they made again toward the roadstead where their vessel lay.

And now night dropped slowly upon the wide watery levels in front; and at no great distance from them, where the shore-line curved round, and formed a long riband of shade upon the horizon, a series of points of yellow light began to start into existence, denoting the spot to be the site of Budmouth, where the lamps were

being lighted along the parade. The cluck of their oars was the only sound of any distinctness upon the sea, and as they labored amid the thickening shades the lamp-lights grew larger, each appearing to send a flaming sword deep down into the waves before it, until there arose, among other dim shapes of the kind, the form of the vessel for which they were bound.[1]

We may state the main topic of each of these paragraphs roughly as follows:

1. Troy, in swimming, carried off shore by a current
2. His danger, and his efforts to avert it
3. His rescue
4. His rescuers, and their treatment of him
5. The row to the brig in the gathering darkness

Seen thus, it is obvious that the paragraphs mark successive stages of the narrative; that as we pass from one paragraph to the next we likewise pass from one particular aspect of the story to another. One thing at a time, and not too much of it, is the working rule for paragraphing.

(3) *Marking stages of thought.* We shall now look at a passage from Poe which shows the paragraphs marking successive stages of thought ("ratiocination" would perhaps be Poe's word here) rather than stages of narrative:

The tale proper, in our opinion, affords unquestionably the fairest field for the exercise of the loftiest talent which can be afforded by the wide domains of mere prose. Were we bidden to say how the highest genius could be most advantageously employed for the best display of its own powers, we should answer, without hesitation—in the composition of a rimed poem, not to exceed in length what might be perused in an hour. Within this limit alone can the highest order of true poetry exist. We need only here say, upon this topic, that, in almost all classes of composition, the unity of effect or impression is a point of the greatest importance. It is clear, moreover, that this unity cannot be

[1]Thomas Hardy, *Far from the Madding Crowd*, chap. xlvii.

thoroughly preserved in productions whose perusal cannot be completed at one sitting. We may continue the reading of a prose composition, from the very nature of prose itself, much longer than we can persevere, to any good purpose, in the perusal of a poem. This latter, if truly fulfilling the demands of the poetic sentiment, induces an exaltation of the soul which cannot be long sustained. All high excitements are necessarily transient. Thus a long poem is a paradox. And, without unity of impression, the deepest effects cannot be brought about. Epics were the offspring of an imperfect sense of Art, and their reign is no more. A poem *too* brief may produce a vivid, but never an intense or enduring impression. Without a certain continuity of effort—without a certain duration or repetition of purpose—the soul is never deeply moved. There must be the dropping of the water upon the rock. De Béranger has wrought brilliant things—pungent and spirit-stirring—but, like immassive bodies, they lack *momentum*, and thus fail to satisfy the Poetic Sentiment. They sparkle and excite, but, from want of continuity, fail deeply to impress. Extreme brevity will degenerate into epigrammatism; but the sin of extreme length is even more unpardonable. *In medio tutissimus ibis.*

Were we called upon, however, to designate that class of composition, which, next to such a poem as we have suggested, should best fulfill the demands of high genius—should offer it the most advantageous field of exertion—we should unhesitatingly speak of the prose tale, as Mr. Hawthorne has here exemplified it. We allude to the short prose narrative, requiring from a half-hour to one or two hours in its perusal. The ordinary novel is objectionable, from its length, for reasons already stated in substance. As it cannot be read at one sitting, it deprives itself, of course, of the immense force derivable from *totality*. Worldly interests intervening during the pauses of perusal, modify, annul, or counteract, in a greater or less degree, the impressions of the book. But simple cessation in reading, would, of itself, be sufficient to destroy the true unity. In the brief tale, however, the author is enabled to carry out the fullness of his intention, be it what it may. During the hour of perusal the soul of the reader is at the writer's control. There are no external or extrinsic influences—resulting from weariness or interruption.

A skillful literary artist has constructed a tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents; but having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single *effect*

to be wrought out, he then invents such incidents—he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tend not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one preëstablished design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at length painted which leaves in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of the fullest satisfaction. The idea of the tale has been presented unblemished, because undisturbed; and this is an end unattainable by the novel. Undue brevity is just as exceptionable here as in the poem; but undue length is yet more to be avoided.[1]

The main topics of these three paragraphs are:

1. The highest genius can best display itself in the composition of a unified rimed poem which might be read in an hour.

2. Next to the poem the best field for genius is the unified prose tale which requires from a half-hour to one or two hours in its perusal.

3. In the prose tale a skillful artist aims at singleness of effect.

These paragraphs represent fairly enough the actual kind of paragraph division employed by most good essayists. Each paragraph is sufficiently distinct in substance to mark off a separate block of thought as the writer turns from one important idea to another. The passage illustrates, also, the overlapping of paragraphs. The second paragraph develops an idea stated in the first sentence of the first paragraph. Such overlapping does not tend, of course, toward strict unity in each of the separate paragraphs, but it makes for more coherent expression of the thought of the composition as a whole.

(4) *Representing the structure of the composition.* We shall now consider the theory of paragraphing from another

[1]Poe, *Review of Twice-Told Tales.*

angle. The subject of a composition may usually be divided, as we have seen (page 56), into two or more parts, and these in turn may be subdivided; the process of division being limited, for practical purposes, only by the degree of minuteness with which the subject is treated. Now, unless the composition is to be very brief—say one or two hundred words—each division should be treated in a paragraph or in a group of paragraphs: in a single paragraph if the scale of treatment allows a given division to be handled briefly; in a group of paragraphs if the scale of treatment requires a given division to be subdivided. In the former case a single paragraph will represent a main division of the subject; in the latter, a group of paragraphs will represent a main division and the separate paragraphs that make up the group will each represent a subdivision.

To illustrate, let us work out the paragraphing for a paper on elementary training in horsemanship. The main divisions of our subject are, let us say, the following:

I. Establishing confidence
II. Suppling the body
III. Maintaining a firm and correct seat independent of the reins
IV. Using the aids
V. The common gaits

If the paper were to be four or five pages long, the scale of treatment would permit only a brief and general discussion of each of the five main points. In that case each topic could be conveniently handled in a single paragraph; and accordingly each paragraph would represent a main division of the subject. Now suppose the work were to be carried out on a larger scale, made more detailed. In that case the outline itself would need expanding and would read, perhaps, as outlined on the top of the next page:

I. Establishing confidence
   1. General considerations
   2. Exercises favorable to imparting confidence
II. Suppling the body
   1. Why suppling is essential
   2. Suppling exercises
   3. Mounted gymnastics
   4. Exercises with horse in place
   5. Exercises with horse in motion
III. Maintaining a firm and correct seat independent of the reins
   1. What a correct seat is
   2. Riding without reins and stirrups
   3. Jumping
IV. Using the aids
   1. The legs
   2. The reins
   3. The weight
V. The common gaits
   1. The trot
   2. The gallop[1]

In this more detailed composition if each main division were represented by a single paragraph, the paragraphs would grow too unwieldy to be useful. Consequently each main division would be treated in a group of paragraphs, each paragraph in the group representing a subdivision. That is, point I would be handled in two paragraphs; point II, in five; point III, in three; and so on.

(5) *Organization of the paragraph.* The organization of the paragraph is not essentially different from the organization of the composition. It has a central idea which requires development, and the contents of the paragraph are selected with this end in view. Orderly arrangement is as desirable in the paragraph as in the composition; so, too, are articulation and proportion. In essentials, then, the

[1]Adapted from *Provisional Drill and Service Regulations for Field Artillery: Horse and Light*, Vol. I, Part III, chap. i, 1916.

paragraph is a composition on a small scale. Its unity may often be shown by summing it up in a single sentence called "the topic sentence."

We shall now look at a few typical examples of paragraph construction. The first of these illustrates the development of the central idea by means of details alone:

> In June the cucumber tree that Arthur loved showed no sign of bloom. The great white fleshy petals of the blossoms were scorched before the buds opened, and only a few long, dried leaves remained on the branches. Then step by step that devastating heat crept into the Ravine—blasting each green thing in turn and stilling the sound of falling water. The ferns on the cliffs became twisted brown shapes of agony; the standing water on the rocky shelves grew less and less; the muddy bottoms of pools rose to record faithfully the prints of many visiting feet on their baking surfaces; the grapevines withered and sagged, falling away from the branches they had clung to; the quivering air was filled with the evil smell of fish that had died in the hot shallows; the lichens scaled off the rocks; and the brook, which usually fell with such joyous leapings and shoutings, became a mere silent trickle that left the rocks in its bed all parched and quivering in the relentless sun.

The topic of the paragraph is not fully and definitely stated, but is suggested in every sentence—hence the marked unity of the passage. The arrangement is not as simple as it may appear to be at first glance. As a whole, the order is chronological, but this is not true of the parts:

I. Failure of cucumber tree to flower	II. Drying-up of Ravine
1. Blossoms heat-killed	1. Details of II

II follows I in sequence of time; the order in I is effect to cause; in II, it is general to particular. The scale is small, but in principles of organization this paragraph differs not a whit from a long composition.

The next example illustrates, incidentally, the one point

in which the organization of the paragraph may differ from that of the composition. As a part related to other parts and to a whole, its content and arrangement may to some extent be modified by the demands of coherence in the composition. It may be shaped a little here or there to link it more closely with what precedes or follows.

They appeared to be all persons living in the immediate neighborhood, for they addressed each other familiarly and were conversing about love matters. One of them, however, soon dropped out of the conversation, and edging away from the others stood a little space apart, leaning against the wall on the side of the porch furthest from me. I began to notice this man very particularly, for it was plain to see that I had excited his interest in an extraordinary manner, and I did not like his scrutiny. He was, without exception, the most murderous-looking villain I have ever had the misfortune to meet: that was the deliberate opinion I came to before I formed a closer acquaintance with him. He was a broad-chested, powerful-looking man of medium height; his hands he kept concealed under the large cloth poncho he wore; and he had on a slouch hat that just allowed his eyes to be seen under the rim. They were truculent, yellowish-green eyes, that seemed to grow fiery and dim and fiery again by turns, yet never for a single instant were they averted from my face. His black hair hung to his shoulders, and he also had a bristly mustache, which did not conceal his brutal mouth, nor was there any beard to hide his broad, swarthy jowl. His jaws were the only part of him that had any motion while he stood there, still as a bronze statue, watching me. At intervals he ground his teeth, after which he would slap his lips together two or three times, while a slimy froth, most sickening to see, gathered at the corners of his mouth.[1]

The first sentence ties this paragraph to the one before it, the second and third sentences introduce the subject of the paragraph, and the fourth sentence announces the subject explicitly. The remaining sentences in this paragraph develop by details the idea of "murderous-looking villain."

[1] W. H. Hudson, *The Purple Land.*

In the following paragraph the topic sentence is placed at the beginning:

This Madrid climate is a gallant one, and kindlier to the women than the men. The ladies are built on the old-fashioned generous plan. Like a Southern table in the old times, the only fault is too abundant plenty. They move along with a superb dignity of carriage that Banting would like to banish from the world, their round white shoulders shining in the starlight, their fine heads elegantly draped in the coquettish and always graceful mantilla. But you would look in vain among the men of Madrid for such fullness and liberality of structure. They are thin, eager, sinewy in appearance—though it is the spareness of the Turk, not of the American. It comes from tobacco and the Guadarrama winds. This still, fine, subtle air that blows from the craggy peaks over the treeless plateau seems to take all superfluous moisture out of the men of Madrid. But it is, like Benedick's wit, "a most manly air, it will not hurt a woman."[1]

The idea expressed in the topic sentence is here developed by details set in contrast. The last sentence rounds out the paragraph and reënforces its unity by stating the topic in another form.

In this next paragraph the idea is developed negatively, or by a process of exclusion:

The only real authorities for the events which took place in Britain during the fifth and sixth centuries are Gildas and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.* There are other writers—Ethelwerd, for instance, who copied the *Chronicle,* and adds nothing; and Nennius, whose work, edited by one Mark the Hermit in the tenth century, was found in the Vatican. . . . Nennius gives a brief account of King Arthur and his exploits, but he affords little or no information that is of use to us. The work of Richard of Cirencester is extremely valuable on account of its topography; it is also interesting as the work of the first English antiquary. But he belonged to the fourteenth century, and has added nothing to the history, of which he knew no more—less, indeed—than we ourselves can dis-

[1]John Hay, *Castilian Days.* Used by permission of, and by arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Co.

cover. The book named after Geoffrey of Monmouth is not worth a moment's consideration. In Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* passages may be found which throw side lights on this period, but they are few.[1]

If this were a short whole composition, it would lack unity; for nothing is said which develops the idea that Gildas and the *Chronicle* are "real authorities." To say that A, B, and C are not authorities does not, of course, persuade us to think that X and Y are. But the word *only* in the proposition stated in the opening sentence of Besant's paragraph requires that the claims of A, B, and C be dismissed. In the paragraph before us these claims are dealt with; a single step in the development of the proposition is taken, and the paragraph is unified. Having cleared the way, Besant then goes on to a discussion of Gildas and the *Chronicle* as authorities.

The next example is more complex than the preceding ones, but it is not on that account any the less firm in construction:

How to live?—that is the essential question for us. Not how to live in the mere material sense only, but in the widest sense. The general problem which comprehends every special problem is—the right ruling of conduct in all directions under all circumstances. In what way to treat the body; in what way to treat the mind; in what way to manage our affairs; in what way to bring up a family; in what way to behave as a citizen; in what way to utilize all those sources of happiness which nature supplies—how to use all our faculties to the greatest advantage to ourselves and others—how to live completely? And this being the great thing needful for us to learn, is, by consequence, the great thing which education has to teach. To prepare us for complete living is the function which education has to discharge; and the only rational mode of judging of any educational course is to judge in what degree it discharges such function.[2]

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[1]Sir Walter Besant, *London*. Used by permission of Harper & Brothers.
[2]Herbert Spencer, *What Knowledge Is of Most Worth*.

The first sentence states a conclusion already arrived at. The three sentences immediately following develop the meaning of the first sentence partly by restating it in new terms, partly by particularizing. The course of thought in the first four sentences might fairly be described as from the general to the particular. And then by close reasoning[1] the reader is brought to a new conclusion—that a course of education should be judged according to the preparation it affords for complete living. The paragraph has accomplished two things: it has clarified an idea and then drawn from this idea another one.

The last mode of development that we shall touch on is that known as "exemplification"—the giving of examples: The writer is discussing Spanish life and character:

An infraction of parental discipline is never forgiven. I knew a general whose daughter fell in love with his adjutant, a clever and amiable young officer. He had positively no objection to the suitor, but was surprised that there should be any love-making in his house without his previous suggestion. He refused his consent, and the young people were married without it. The father and son-in-law went off on a campaign, fought, and were wounded in the same battle. The general was asked to recommend his son-in-law for promotion. "I have no son-in-law!" "I mean your daughter's husband." "I have no daughter." "I refer to Lieutenant Don Fulano de Tal. He is a good officer. He distinguished himself greatly in the recent affair." "Ah! otra cosa!" said the grim father-in-law. His hate could not overcome his sense of justice. The youth got his promotion, but his general will not recognize him at the club.[2]

The example gives concreteness to the abstract statement in the topic sentence. We now have a more vivid idea of what parental discipline was in Spain some fifty years ago

[1]The student of logic can express the reasoning here in the form of two syllogisms, the conclusion of the first becoming the major premise of the second.

[2]John Hay, *Castilian Days*. Used by permission of, and by arrangement with, Houghton Mifflin Co.

(the book was published in 1871) and what an infraction of it might lead to. Exemplification is a widely useful mode of development.

(6) *Paragraphing for rapidity and emphasis.* Two other considerations besides clearness may modify paragraphing. The writer may here and there abandon the normal paragraph structure and use short paragraphs for the sake of giving the effect of rapidity or of gaining emphasis for particular statements. In narratives, especially at points where the story moves swiftly forward, short paragraphs help to give rapidity to the movement. In expositions and arguments, too, short paragraphs woven in among longer ones help to give a reader the feeling that he is progressing rapidly from point to point. As might be expected, short paragraphs abound in essays in which the author aims to be light and sparkling, suggestive rather than discursive. The short paragraph is useful, furthermore, as a means of emphasis. These two uses of the paragraph are illustrated in this extract from Thomas Hardy's *Two on a Tower:*

When Swithin had parted from Lady Constantine, on the previous Ash-Wednesday, he had gone straight to the homestead and prepared his account of "A New Astronomical Discovery." It was written perhaps in too glowing a rhetoric for the true scientific tone of mind; but there was no doubt that his assertion met with a most startling aptness all the difficulties which had accompanied the received theories on the phenomena attending those changeable suns of marvelous systems so far away. It accounted for the nebulous mist that surrounds some of them at their weakest time; in short, took up a position of probability which has not yet been successfully assailed.

The papers were written in triplicate, and carefully sealed up with blue wax. One copy was directed to Greenwich, another to the Royal Society, another to a prominent astronomer. A brief statement of the essence of the discovery was also prepared for the leading daily paper.

He considered these documents, embodying as they did two

years of his constant thought, reading, and observation, too important to be entrusted for posting to the hands of a messenger; too important to be sent to the sub-post-office at hand. Though the day was wet, dripping wet, he went on foot with them to a chief office, five miles off, and registered them. Quite exhausted by the walk, after his long night-work, wet through, yet sustained by the sense of a great achievement, he called at a bookseller's for the astronomical periodicals to which he subscribed; then, resting for a short time at an inn, he plodded his way homeward, reading his papers as he went, and planning how to enjoy a repose on his laurels of a week or more.

On he strolled through the rain, holding the umbrella vertically over the exposed page to keep it dry while he read. Suddenly his eye was struck by an article. It was the review of a pamphlet by an American astronomer, in which the author announced a conclusive discovery with regard to variable stars.

The discovery was precisely the discovery of Swithin St. Cleeve. Another man had forestalled his fame by a period of six weeks.

Abuse of the short paragraph lessens its effectiveness. There is no more shading and modulation in a long series of little paragraphs than there is in a song sung from beginning to end at the top of one's voice. And there is something radically wrong with a writer's thought if it can be expressed throughout a composition of any length in tiny chips and shavings of paragraphs; it must at some points be insufficiently developed, or the true relation between some of the statements must be unperceived. In the following passage no grouping of sentences helps the reader to a clearer grasp of relations, and no sentence receives special emphasis:

It may be urged that the objection to democratic control of foreign affairs is not that the questions are too complicated, but that they are too important for popular decision.

Their importance is, I think, often misrepresented by those who concern themselves with international relations.

They are apt to assume that the real business of a state is its

foreign policy, and that domestic policy is a kind of sordid game, dividing a nation and weakening it in the pursuit of its true purposes.

Whereas a just estimate would show that the contrary is the case: that, for example, the domestic questions that have been rightly preoccupying England and France during the last decade touch vitally those real needs of men and women which it is difficult to bring into any relation at all to the issues that led up to the recent war.

Still, foreign policy is very important, if only because it may produce war.

But then, what reason is there to suppose that, for this reason, the people, if properly informed, would be unfit to deal with it?

In fact, two opposite charges are brought against them, either of which might be true at one time or another.

It is supposed that they would not be ready to face the test of war, when it was vital to the nation's interest that they should.

And it is supposed that they would rush into war when their wise counselors would have kept them out of it.

Either of these things might certainly happen.

But what happens now?

What has been happening for centuries?

Transitions. We come now to transitions, the third way of securing articulation. A transition is a statement indicating a shift from one aspect of a subject to another. It says, in effect, "We have finished with A and now turn to B." This is almost precisely what Huxley says in a lecture on *The Present Condition of Organic Nature:*

> Having thus, in this sort of general way, sketched to you what I may call, perhaps, the architecture of the body of the Horse (what we term technically its Morphology), I must now turn to another aspect. A horse is not a mere dead structure. . . .

That is a sign-board, telling us how far we have come and whither we are going. It is difficult to get lost in so civilized a country.

The most elaborate form of transition is the transitional paragraph. This is used to mark a turning-point of importance, especially in compositions of considerable length. It usually includes a summarizing statement of what has preceded and an indication of what is to come. The following example occurs at the end of fifty-two pages of discussion of clearness and emphasis in play-writing and immediately preceding a discussion of movement:

> It is not enough, however, by clearness and right emphasis to maintain interest; as the play develops, the interest should if possible be increased. Either to maintain or to increase interest means that a hearer must be led on from scene to scene, act to act, absorbed while the curtain is up and, between the acts, eager for it to rise again. Such attention given a play means that it has a third essential quality, movement.[1]

In this instance the summarizing portion is very brief because the preceding discussion has centered on two qualities that can be indicated in two words, clearness and emphasis. When the subject-matter is more complex, or for any other reason cannot be so quickly disposed of, writers who seek clearness do not hesitate to expand their summaries. Herbert Spencer closes the preliminary part of his essay on *What Knowledge Is of Most Worth* as follows:

> These, then, are the general ideas with which we must set out in discussing a curriculum: Life as divided into several kinds of activity of successively decreasing importance; the worth of each order of facts as regulating these several kinds of activity, intrinsically, quasi-intrinsically, and conventionally; and their regulative influence estimated both as knowledge and discipline.

Such transitions serve the double purpose of clinching in the memory the main support of what has been said, and of calling attention to a change in the line of thought.

[1]George Pierce Baker, *Dramatic Technique*, p. 207.

Less elaborate transitions, in which the emphasis on structure is not so marked, are placed either at the beginning or the end of ordinary paragraphs:

1. As to the acting, it is, on the whole, much worse than the play. Miss Kate Rorke, comely, ladylike, and self-possessed, turns her emotion on and off by her well-established method . . .[1]

2. . . . And this brings us back to the great question of romance and realism, two words which can hardly fail to drop from the modern writer's pen in treating of such a subject.

There is much talk in our day of the realistic school of fiction, and the romantic school . . .[2]

Such transitions are sufficient to mark all the turning-points in most compositions of moderate length, or to mark the lesser turning-points in long or intricate compositions.

Verbal links. (1) *Within the paragraph.* Verbal links—words or phrases that knit sentences together—afford, in the first place, articulation within the paragraph. They are to the paragraph what all the means of articulation are to the composition as a whole, binding the sentences together in a coherent texture of thought. In the two following paragraphs, link-words are printed in italics:

(A)

As we lived near the road, we often had the traveler or stranger visit us to taste our gooseberry-wine, for which we had great reputation; and I profess, with the veracity of an historian, that I never knew one of them find fault with it. Our cousins, *too*, even to the fortieth remove, all remembered their affinity, without any help from the herald's office, and came very frequently to see us. *Some of them* did us no great honor by *these* claims of kindred, as we had the blind, the maimed, and the halt amongst the number. *However*, my wife always insisted that, as *they* were the same flesh and blood, *they* should sit with us at the same table. *So that*, if

[1] G. Bernard Shaw, *Dramatic Opinions and Essays*, Vol. I, p. 5.
[2] F. Marion Crawford, *The Novel: What It Is*, pp. 75-76.

we had not very rich, we generally had very happy, friends about us; for this remark will hold good through life, that the poorer the guest, the better pleased he ever is with being treated; and as some men gaze with admiration at the colors of a tulip or the wing of a butterfly, so I was by nature an admirer of happy human faces. *However*, when any one of *our relations* was found to be a person of very bad character, a troublesome guest, or one we desired to get rid of, upon his leaving my house I ever took care to lend him a riding-coat or a pair of boots, or sometimes an horse of small value, and I always had the satisfaction of finding he never came back to return them. By *this* the house was cleared of *such* as we did not like; but never was the family of Wakefield known to turn the traveler or the poor dependant out of doors.[1]

(B)

I have likened Joubert to Coleridge; and indeed the points of resemblance between the two men are numerous. *Both of them* great and celebrated talkers, Joubert attracting pilgrims to his upper chamber in the Rue St.-Honoré, as Coleridge attracted pilgrims to Mr. Gilman's at Highgate; *both of them* desultory and incomplete writers—*here* they had an outward likeness with one another. *Both of them* passionately devoted to reading in a class of books, and to thinking on a class of subjects, out of the beaten line of the reading and thought of their day; *both of them* ardent students and critics of old literature, poetry, and the metaphysics of religion; *both of them* curious explorers of words, and of the latest significance hidden under the popular use of them; *both of them*, in a certain sense, conservative in religion and politics, by antipathy to the narrow and shallow foolishness of vulgar modern liberalism—*here* they had their inward and real likeness. *But* that in which the essence of *their likeness* consisted is this—that *they both* had from nature an ardent impulse for seeking the genuine truth on all matters they thought about, and a gift for finding it and recognizing it when it was found. To have the *impulse for seeking this truth* is much rarer than most people think; to have the gift for finding it is, I need not say, very rare indeed. By *this* they have a spiritual relationship of the closest kind with one another, and they become, *each of them*, a source of stimulus and progress for all of us.[2]

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[1]Goldsmith, *The Vicar of Wakefield.*
[2]Arnold, *Essays in Criticism*, "Joubert."

The foregoing passages, dissimilar in many points of style, are alike in having their sentences riveted together by words that refer unmistakably from one sentence to another. There are (1) connectives like *too*, *however*, and *but;* (2) demonstratives like *these* and *this;* and (3) repetitions of important words like that of "their likeness" (B, line 16) and "impulse for seeking" (B, line 19). These are the common devices for linking sentences together. Arnold varies the third method by adding similarity of sentence form (compare B, line 6 with line 15) and by further enforcing this by contrast in meaning (line 6, *outward;* line 15, *inward*). In the use of these devices there are possibilities for endless variety. The skilled writer, even in passages of very close thought which require the maximum of articulation, does not repel by being mechanical or monotonous.[1]

But if the connection between sentences is instantly clear, verbal links are unnecessary. There is no briskness, liveliness, rapidity in a needlessly articulated style. Consider the following, which is without connectives or demonstratives:

More inexplicable is Shaw's dislike of the Elizabethans. His lips curl with scorn when their names are mentioned. He forgives Shakespeare many extravagances; Marlowe, Ford, Massinger, Beaumont and Fletcher, Middleton, Dekker, none. Their rhetoric is insane and hideous; they are a crew of insufferable bunglers and dullards; the Renaissance was an orgy; Marlowe might, if he had lived today, have been a tolerable imitation of Kipling; all their plays are full of murder, lust, obscenity, cruelty; no ray of noble feeling, no touch of faith, beauty, nor even common kindliness is to be discovered in them, says critic Shaw.[2]

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[1]Even among plain, out and out link-words there is a wider range of choice than some students seem to be aware of. Among the commonest are: *again, also, although, and, besides, but, else, for example, for instance, further, furthermore, hence, however, indeed, likewise, moreover, nevertheless, nor, now, on the contrary, on the one hand, on the other hand, so, still, the following, the foregoing, the former, the latter, the preceding, then, therefore, though, thus, well, yet.* They have their distinctions, which should be learned.

[2]James Huneker, Introduction to Shaw's *Dramatic Opinions.*

Here each sentence after the first is a reiteration or expansion of the phrase "dislike of the Elizabethans," and stands so obviously in that relation that pronouns furnish all the articulation needed.

(2) *Between paragraphs.* In addition to binding together the sentences within a paragraph, verbal links are used to join paragraphs themselves whenever there could be reasonable doubt about the continuity or smoothness of passage from one to another. Here are a few examples of plain and straightforward articulation taken from Jane Austen's *Northanger Abbey* (the quotations are opening sentences of paragraphs; the link-words are in italics):

1. Catherine's blood ran cold with the horrid suggestions which naturally sprang from *these* words . . .

2. The day which she had spent at *that* place had been one of the happiest of her life.

3. Anxious as were all her conjectures on *this* point, it was not, however, the one on which she dwelt most.

4. Catherine hoped so, *too*, and tried to feel an interest in her own amendment, but her spirits were quite worn down.

Another way of joining paragraphs is to catch up something from the end of one paragraph and use it as a point of departure for the next. Illustrations (*a*) and (*b*), which follow, are likewise from *Northanger Abbey:*

(*a*)

. . . . She saw that the infatuation had been created, the mischief settled, long before her quitting Bath, and it seemed as if the whole might be traced to the influence of that sort of reading which she had there indulged.

Charming as were all Mrs. Radcliffe's works, and charming even as were the works of all her imitators, it was not in them perhaps that human nature, at least in the midland counties of England, was to be looked for . . .

(*b*)

. . . . Yes, only ten days ago had he elated her by his pointed regard—had he even confused her by his too significant reference! And now, what had she done, or what had she omitted to do, to merit such a change?

The only offense against him, of which she could accuse herself, had been such as was scarcely possible to reach his knowledge . . .

EXERCISES

1. Tabulate all the mechanical means of articulation to be found in some textbook used by your class.

2. Point out the topic sentences in the paragraphs of the "Letter on Impressment," reprinted in the Appendix (page 621).

3. Determine the methods of paragraph development used in the "Letter on Impressment."

4. State the topic of each one of the first ten paragraphs in "Edgar Allan Poe," reprinted in the Appendix (page 607).

5. Write a paragraph developing one of the following topics by means of details set in contrast, as on page 79:

(1) Some students let the social side of college life overshadow the intellectual side.
(2) "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."
(3) Old clothes *versus* new clothes.
(4) "The race is not always to the swiftest."
(5) Truth is stranger than fiction.
(6) An old-fashioned girl.
(7) A stay-at-home traveler.
(8) The West is politically more progressive than the East.
(9) The scenery of the East is more varied than that of the Middle West.
(10) A wealthy poor man (or woman).

6. Write a paragraph on one of the ten subjects listed on the top of the next page and suggest the subject in each sentence:

(1) A hot afternoon.
(2) A rainy day.
(3) A very respectable man (or woman).
(4) An extremely conventional man (or woman).
(5) An absent-minded person.
(6) A bashful person.
(7) A monotonous journey.
(8) A dry or uninteresting lecture.
(9) An enthusiastic audience.
(10) A fertile valley.

7. Write a paragraph developing one of the following topics by exemplification:

(1) A college boarding-house is no school of good table manners.
(2) A professor is sometimes a human being.
(3) A good book is a good friend.
(4) Daylight-saving time is not an unmixed blessing.
(5) Honesty is the best policy.
(6) Too many cooks spoil the broth.
(7) Farming is a speculative business.
(8) Silence is not always golden.

8. Make two outlines of one of the subjects given in Exercise 7 (page 67): the first outline for a brief composition in which each of the main divisions of the subject will be treated in a single paragraph; the second outline for a longer composition in which each main division will be treated in a group of paragraphs.

9. Bring to class an example of a transition taken from some current magazine.

10. What means of articulation are used in the following extracts?

(A)

Never was there a man who in the course of a long life changed less. What as a boy he dreamed of doing, that he did. The thoughts of his earliest poems are the thoughts of his latest. His tales, his songs, his monologues, his dramas, his jests, his sermons, his rage, his prayer, are all upon the same theme:

whatever fed his mind nourished these beliefs. His interest in the world was solely an interest in them. He saw them in history and in music; his travels and studies brought him back nothing else but proofs of them; the universe in each of its manifestations was a commentary upon them. His nature was the simplest, the most positive, the least given to abstract speculation, which England can show in his time. He was not a thinker, for he was never in doubt. He had recourse to disputation as a means of inculcating truth, but he used it like a lawyer arguing a case. His conclusions were fixed from the start.

(B)

Thus far we have been considering the drama with reference to the general principles which govern it. We have distinguished drama from other literary forms; have considered those qualities which have always been deemed indispensable for good dramatic effect, namely, truth, unity, proportion, seriousness; and have determined, at least in part, what are the essential elements of tragedy and comedy.

Turning now from these fundamental principles, which apply with more or less exactness to other forms of art than the drama, we come to consider in detail the way in which the dramatic form works itself out—the rules of its technique.

But here, too, before proceeding to those more mechanical regulations which are a part of the craft and are somewhat variable, we ought first to emphasize such laws as are a part of the art and are basic, and therefore permanent.

(C)

A playwright's style is shaped and limited by the conditions under which he must work. These conditions apply to the playwright alone, and are quite imperative in their nature. In the first place, he must say a great deal in a very limited time, for the drama is a highly condensed form of literature. In the second place, he must make himself understood on the first hearing, for the audience at a theater has no opportunity to linger over a shadowy passage and extract fine shades of meaning from it. Two essential elements of his style, then, must be terseness and lucidity. In addition to these it must also have

great flexibility in order that his people may speak "in character"—that is, his fishwives must speak in the vernacular of fishwives, and his kings after the manner of royalty. At times, too, he must have the power of phrasing a thing so that it will strike the audience like a clap of thunder; he must be able to point a remark so that it will stick in the memory like a bur. These are the fundamentals of a playwright's style, and not until he has mastered them thoroughly should he attempt to embellish his dialogue with softer literary graces.

(D)

In all the remarks which I have been making, I have hitherto abstained from any attempt to suggest a positive application of them. I have limited myself to simply pointing out in how changed a world of ideas we are living; I have not sought to go further, and to discuss in what particular manner the world of facts is to adapt itself to this changed world of ideas. This has been my rule so far; but from this rule I shall here venture to depart, in order to dwell for a moment on a matter of practical institution, designed to meet new social exigencies: on the intervention of the State in public education.

11. Point out all the verbal links in "A Plea for Argumentation," reprinted in the Appendix (page 619).

V. Proportion

The working principle. *Determine the amount of space to be given each aspect of a subject by its relative importance in the composition as a whole.*

The theory of proportion. Some parts of a composition are of major importance, some of minor. Proportional treatment demands that the major parts be given most space; that incidental matters be brought in incidentally; that the lesser shall not overbalance the greater. There should be an adjustment between the amount of attention directed to any part of a composition and the significance of that part in relation to the whole. If it is the most

significant part, it should be distinguished as such; if it is subordinate, the fact should be indicated. If we turn this around and look at it from the reader's point of view, it may appear even more important. Why is it that Brutus is in *Julius Caesar* a more important figure than Caesar? Partly because Shakespeare belittles Caesar, but chiefly because more attention is directed to Brutus's thoughts and actions, because he is given more space in the play. Should we still think King Lear the main figure of the tragedy if twice as many lines were given to Gloucester as to Lear? Had Mercutio gone on living and done most of the talking and acting, would Romeo have stood out so clearly as the hero? Surely, for the audience, relatively large space creates relatively large values.

Good and bad proportion contrasted. If the writer gives too much space to minor parts, he may be forced to skimp his treatment of points that are more important or that really need explanation—especially if the composition is brief. Turning back to the extracts from the theme on "The Theory of Rifle-Shooting" (page 43), we find the fault standing out clearly. Gravitation is relevant to the discussion; but all that need be said is that the bullet begins to drop as soon as it leaves the barrel of the rifle, and that the longer it is in flight, the faster it falls. Ptolemy and Newton should be left to well-earned rest, and the space devoted to them and to the remainder of this needless expansion should be given over to "keyholing," "lands," "radius of gyration," and other pertinent phenomena which get short shrift in the hurried conclusion. Compare with this the admirable proportions of the quotation from Matthew Arnold (page 87). Arnold's paragraph is a development of the general statement in the first sentence. The second sentence takes up the outward points of resemblance. But that is a simple matter and Arnold therefore

passes over it briefly. To the inner points of resemblance, however, he devotes about four times as much space, for these are at once less obvious and more significant. There is nothing here of what Carlyle calls "that altogether misdirected industry, which is seen vigorously thrashing mere straw."

The need of good proportion. The total effect of a composition may be ruined by bad proportion. The following illustration of such failure is long, but it will probably bring the value of sound proportion home to us more forcibly than would a series of short extracts in which the maladjustments were, after all, rather petty:

The Genius of Susan

It was the first day of Susan's summer vacation. She was hanging her new velvet pumps over the edge of the bridge and using the reflecting water beneath as her mirror—which was clear enough to show her frowning face.

Close by was her home, with her mother standing on the porch and calling "Sammy, Sammy!" Her mother, receiving no response, requested Susan to look for him; but Susan was not in the least inclined to do her mother a favor just then. She had come out to enjoy her first morning of vacation, after having prepared breakfast, washed the dishes, and done other morning work. Sammy's absence did not trouble her at all.

As she was sitting there she mused over the other girls: Lucy was going to spend her summer's vacation with her aunt; Mellie was going to her grandmother's in Brushwick; Mary was going to her Uncle Ben's farm; and Europena was going to New York City. New York seemed to be the gateway of the world to Susan, who in all her life had never been more than a few miles from home.

In school Susan had learned something of the world. She was interested in pictures and always esteemed the Chinaman, or had a kind of reverence for him, when she drank her tea, after she had seen his peculiar, plaited hair. She longed to see China, England, Switzerland, France, and Italy on account of various descriptions

of these countries that she had read. Their summer boarders gave her additional information and created within her a greater incentive to travel. She knew that many people started from New York to visit these places, and so she centered her mind on the good fortune of Europena and seemed somewhat downcast at her own lot.

Presently she took up the box beside her, got out some blue silk remnants and began sewing, being careful not to disclose a doll which was at the bottom of the box, through fear that someone might ridicule her—since she was about seventeen years old. However, she was fashioning a doll's dress which had attracted great attention among her friends. As soon as she could thread a needle in her childhood days, she made little aprons, and now she was able to make evening gowns, and all sorts of fancy work.

Susan's object was to re-dress her doll. She was going to clothe her old doll in a nurse's uniform made from the remnants which she had gathered from her mother's waste-basket. Her mother was a dressmaker, and thus some of the qualities were born in her daughter. Recently she had seen a nurse in her uniform, and she now decided to make a similar one for her doll.

As she was sitting there, busily engaged and so absorbed in her work that approaching footsteps were unheard, she was suddenly frightened as she looked up and saw a young man standing beside her.

"Good-morning. Hot this morning, isn't it?" were his first words. This surprise and shock caused her to be quiet, and at once she began to collect her things as if to leave. "Is this water good to drink?" he inquired, after a short pause. He then proceeded to the water's edge and took up a handful of water.

The girl watched him eagerly and also looked at his suitcase standing near her. On it was the tag, with the name of Robert A. Keen, New York City. He joined her again, and noticing her great embarrassment asked whether she lived near by. "Yes, sir," was her prompt reply.

"Do these people like to look at pictures?" he asked her, for he was a college student selling stereoscopic views. A few minutes later he caught a glimpse of the doll, dressed in its blue uniform. "Is that your doll?" he questioned.

"No, I don't play with dolls any more," was her emphatic answer.

"But anyone might feel proud to play with this one," he con-

tinued, as he took the doll and examined the dress. "My sister tried to get a dress like this for my little niece last Christmas, but had to give it up. Who dressed this one?"

"I did," she answered with a smile. "And if I had known it, I could have made one for your sister."

He was greatly surprised and told her she should send her work into the New York Exchange, where she would be greatly rewarded for her services. The young man thought a moment and then made this suggestion: "I will take the doll along to New York in exchange for some views and will return the money that exceeds the cost of the views." Susan accepted the offer, and the young man went on, while she went home and told her mother what had happened.

In the latter part of August Susan received a letter from Helen Keen, saying that her brother had sold the dress for ten dollars, and she had expressed three more dolls to Susan to be dressed. The dolls were soon dressed and on their way back to the metropolis. These were the first of the procession of dolls that Susan sent to the Woman's Exchange. They attracted Mrs. Harper's attention, who was at the head of this exchange and was a very wealthy lady.

The following summer, Mrs. Harper arranged to spend her vacation near Susan's home and thus gain her acquaintance. This was accomplished, and she invited her to accompany her to New York, stay with her, and attend a dress-designing school.

A few weeks later she was enjoying life in that great city, learning the most difficult designing, and making great progress. At the same time she did all the sewing and embroidering for Mrs. Harper, who paid her well. She was not satisfied to stay in New York, but now wished to see Paris, the home of original fashions.

The following summer this opportunity came, when Mr. Robert A. Keen invited Susan to accompany him to France as Mrs. Keen.

The last four paragraphs are entirely out of proportion with the rest of the story. From the leisurely manner in which the story begins the reader has every right to expect a full and rounded account; but he has scarcely finished reading the introductory portions of the tale, when he suddenly

finds himself rushed pell-mell to the conclusion. The final paragraphs are nothing more than a synopsis of what should be the main part of the narrative.

In Conclusion

In the case of "The Genius of Susan," failure to observe the principle of proportion has led to failure in the composition as a whole. But it would be one-sided to leave the impression at the end of this chapter that neglect of proportion, or of any of the other principles of structure, would in every case lead to disaster. Successful writers have overridden them in the past and, no doubt, will continue to do so. But when the violation of some fundamental principle of structure is found in a successful composition, there will be found also some special power which compensates, or seems to compensate, for the defect. We ignore or tolerate the one for the sake of the other. Great strength in one direction may counterbalance weakness in another; superior mobility, for example, in one army may equalize the superior number of troops in another. So it is, oftentimes, with books. For the digressions to be found in De Quincey's essays there is compensation in his exquisite use of words, in the great resources of his knowledge, and in the unusual force of his imagination. A writer of less ability, but of equal diffuseness, would long ago have been consigned to oblivion. Ruskin, on occasion, flings unity or coherence to the winds, but the ardor of Ruskin's thought and the richness of his style make amends to the reader.

For the beginner or the ordinary writer, however, there is small likelihood that some equalizing grace, power, or specially developed ability will make up for failure in the fundamentals of structure. To seek unity, coherence, and proportion is for most writers the surest way to whatever

success they are capable of attaining. Erratic genius furnishes no true model for ordinary writers, who can reproduce its shortcomings and defects but not its strokes of power. Common sense is strongly on the side of unity, coherence, and proportion.

EXERCISES

1. Write three summaries of "Corporations and the Nation" (page 604), one of three hundred words, one of one hundred fifty, and one of fifty. In each summary try to retain the most important ideas. Observe in each case the material that you leave out. Does the author's treatment of any of this discarded material seem out of proportion to its relative value?

2. Make a topical list of the important events in the life of Abraham Lincoln (a good encyclopedia will give sufficient information for the purpose of this exercise). Assign to each topic the number of words that you think it should have in a thousand word survey of his life. Compare your results with those obtained by other members of the class.

3. Is the following composition well proportioned? If not, wherein does the fault lie? What remedy do you suggest?

The Atomic Theory

"All aboard—Newville, Greason, and Norwood—all ab-o-ard!" shouted the conductor, jumping on the rear platform of his car, just as the engine gave several loud puffs and the engineer shut off the steam. On the platform of the station was seen a young man, with a suitcase in his hand, running swiftly toward the train—his coat and necktie fluttering after him.

"Hey, don't shut that door," he shouted excitedly to the conductor; "I'm coming!" As all the people in the little station came out to see what the trouble was, the young man leaped upon the steps of the car and the conductor pulled him in, just as the train gave a lurch and began slowly to leave the station.

The young man, quite out of breath, stepped into the car

and looked impatiently around for a seat. All seemed to be occupied except one, in which was seated a young man like himself. This personage was cramped up against the window, reading a magazine.

Stepping up more calmly, he asked, "Is this seat occupied?" The other young man looked up from his book with a smile, "No, certainly not; be seated; glad to have company, I'm sure."

The first young man placed his suitcase on the floor and began to arrange his mussed clothes, explaining to his new companion how he most missed the train.

"I see by your grip," he remarked, "that you are returning to college, the same as I."

"Yes," answered the other, "I can hardly bear to return after so long a vacation, especially when we are having an examination the first thing."

"Well," laughed the other, "I don't blame you, but in what subject will you take your examination?"

"In chemistry," replied the second, "and the worst part about it is that I had no time to prepare it. I'm worried to death—and the hardest part—for me anyhow—we will surely be asked, I was told."

"And what is that?"

"The atomic theory."

The other smiled.

"Well," said he at last, "if that is your only weak point, I would be only too glad to explain it, for just before my leaving college one of the professors explained it to us."

"I certainly wish you would," eagerly replied the other, "for otherwise I won't be able to pass, I'm sure."

"Well, then, I'll try to explain as well as I can."

"Prior to the atomic theory," he began, "there were two hypotheses concerning matter as to its final divisibility. Some people believed that matter could be divided indefinitely, while others believed that there was a certain limit.

"No definite law could be established until John Dalton, an English chemist, proposed a theory, known as the atomic theory, which was finally accepted among chemists as the correct explanation of certain conditions."

The second student listened attentively.

"If I can remember all this," he said, "I'll pass sure."

The first continued: "Dalton's theory is as follows: first, all matter consists of very small particles called atoms. These atoms cannot be seen by the aid of the strongest microscope, and cannot be subdivided. All matter, whether a solid, liquid, or gas, consists of these small particles. The form of the matter always depends upon some action or arrangement of these atoms. An atom, however, is the smallest particle of an element which can exist.

"The next point to be explained is that the atoms of all elements are exactly the same, and that those of different elements are all different. That is, to be more concrete, every atom of oxygen is exactly alike; every atom of iron is exactly alike; but an atom of oxygen is entirely different from one of iron.

"In the next place, chemical reaction consists of an exchange or union of the atoms of different elements in certain proportions. For example, when hydrogen is burned in an atmosphere of oxygen, the two gases unite to form the compound water. Now the atomic theory states primarily that every atom of hydrogen unites with every atom of oxygen to form a molecule of water. Of course there are many variations to this, for sometimes two atoms of one element unite with one atom of another to form a molecule. There is also a law, which was developed later than the atomic theory. This states that all gases exist in a molecular or di-atomic condition. This, however, is only an aid to the atomic theory, since it supports the fact that an atom cannot be divided. There are several other laws and hypotheses developed later than the atomic theory, but these only aid to support it rather than to disprove it.

"So the four main facts to remember about the theory are, first, that all matter consists of very small indivisible particles called atoms; second, that all atoms of the same element are exactly alike; third, that atoms of different elements are all different; and, lastly, that chemical change consists simply of the union or exchange of atoms of different elements."

"Well," enthusiastically remarked the student who had been listening, "If I can remember all that, I'll be sure——"

Just at this moment the train gave a violent lurch. The brakes were set upon the wheels tightly, and the train began to slow up. The conductor opened the rear door and passed through the car, shouting in his monotonous voice, "Next stop, Newville."

The young man, who had been listening, started. He pulled out his watch.

"By Jove," he cried, "my stop! I never dreamt we were so near. Very much obliged for the explanation. I don't know how I can thank you."

He quickly seized his grip, brushed his clothes off, shook hands with his companion, and jumped off the train upon the platform.

The train began to move off slowly.

"Good-by!" shouted the young man on the platform, waving his hand.

"Good luck!" shouted the other from the train.

The train moved off. The young man turned abruptly around and walked briskly down a side street.

Three days later a young gentleman received a short note from Newville. Its only words were: "I've passed—hope to see you soon to thank you."

PART TWO

TYPES OF COMPOSITION

CHAPTER III

EXPOSITION

I. The Nature of Exposition

What exposition is. Exposition is the common mode of communicating knowledge by means of words. It is that kind of writing in which the main purpose is to inform, make clear, or explain. The aim of an exposition, generally speaking, is to give the reader an understanding of the subject treated.

The field of exposition. Any kind of information that can be expressed in language is subject-matter for exposition. In other words, the field of exposition is practically as broad as human knowledge. Expository writings range from very simple kinds, such as directions for making mucilage or for taking part in a cross-word puzzle contest, to explanations of profound or abstruse matters, such as the philosophy of pragmatism or the theory of relativity. At one end of the scale is an anonymous writer grinding out information for a trade catalogue; at the other end, Coleridge explaining a subtle point of stage technique in *Hamlet* or Emerson setting forth the doctrine of Compensation.

Simply to name some of the commonest and most important forms of expository writing gives us a notion of the extent and variety of the field that exposition covers. In one group there are guide books, cook books, and manuals for the soldier, the sailor, the aviator, the boy or girl scout, the automobile or radio owner, the chess player, the dog fancier, the forester, the dairyman, and the dressmaker;

many of the crafts, arts, professions, and pastimes have their own magazines, largely devoted to expository articles. In another group are the textbooks used in schools and colleges, covering topics as divergent as geometry and the theory of versification; in a third group are criticisms of the fine arts—music, painting, sculpture, architecture, and literature; in a fourth, those agreeable compositions known as "personal essays," in which the writers inform us of their thoughts and opinions on a thousand-and-one subjects; in a fifth, reports of experiments, investigations, and discoveries in science and technology; in a sixth, the popular "feature articles" of the Sunday newspapers and of many magazines, which tell us how swordfish are caught, or how astronomers are enabled to predict the exact time of a total eclipse of the sun, or of the effects of insulin upon diabetic patients. Much historical and biographical writing is expository; some of it, such as an analysis of the causes of the American Revolution, almost wholly so. If the historian or the biographer is primarily interested in explaining rather than in telling a story, his work will be mainly expository in purpose. Finally, to bring this rough survey of the field of exposition to an end, mention should be made of the great mass of expository writing put forth every working day in the ordinary conduct of business, education, and government.

The essential quality of exposition. Since our purpose in writing exposition is to convey information or knowledge, we succeed in proportion as we make ourselves understood. Back of all excellent and workmanlike exposition is the writer's desire to be clear and understandable. This desire must be alive in us while we are planning and organizing our composition, while we are framing our sentences and grouping them into paragraphs, and while we are revising what we have written. If we honestly wish to be understood,

we shall find the ways and means to achieve lucidity and shall not count as wasted any effort that brings about a gain in clearness. In the finest expositions the meaning is made immediately plain to us as we read. Each sentence gives up its content of fact or idea at once and without a struggle. We are not left to grope our way as best we can through a confusing fog of ideas, but have a good guide to follow. At the end of the journey we feel that we have really learned something about the country through which we have been traveling.

In saying that clearness is the essential quality of exposition it is only fair to add that clearness is relative, not fixed and absolute. An explanation ought to be clear to those for whom it is intended; it need not be written so that it will be clear to any reader. The needs of the stupidest or least informed readers do not set a standard for all expository writing. If we choose to write for them, we are under an obligation to make them understand. But we may, if we wish, address a different kind of audience. The obligation to be clear remains, of course, but we can meet this obligation without limiting ourselves to those aspects of our subject which can be understood by untrained minds and without confining ourselves to words of one syllable.

Requirements for writing exposition. The minimum equipment of the writer of exposition consists in sufficient industry to acquire a knowledge of the necessary facts, enough intellectual curiosity to urge him to think about those facts until they cease to appear isolated and meaningless, and the ability to write clear English. Intellectual curiosity is indeed a necessary part of the writer's equipment; without it, he will not go far in exposition. Man, says John Tyndall, is "gifted with a mind curious to know the causes of things, and surrounded by objects which excite its

questionings and raise the desire for an explanation." This curiosity is fundamental to exposition, its moving cause.

An instance will show how this desire to understand may transform mere routine enumeration into intellectual creation. A student is asked to explain some process. Being an amateur photographer, he sets to work to tell of the processes of photography. He writes that his camera is a "4x5" of a certain make, and goes on to name his lens and shutter. He says that he always uses a particular kind of plate and buys a ready-made "developer" put up by such-and-such a firm of chemists. And so he continues, telling us what he uses but never giving us the least hint of a reason why he uses it. If he states his facts with sufficient accuracy and detail, they may serve as useful directions to a beginner or may possibly give some bit of information to a fellow amateur. These are legitimate expository aims. But if in his entire paper there is nothing to make a reader understand the why and wherefore of the various operations, if there is no evidence of what Joseph Conrad, in *Amy Foster*, calls "that unappeasable curiosity which believes that there is a particle of a general truth in every mystery," his paper remains pretty nearly on the cook-book level. He might have carried his exposition further and made it more informing. He might have used certain simple principles of optics and of chemistry to explain the operations of photography. The statement of the simple underlying principles usually helps to bring order out of confusion; processes which otherwise might seem to a reader merely arbitrary or even accidental appear reasonable and understandable when the ends they serve are made clear.

The statement that a writer should himself understand the thing he tries to explain may seem too obvious for mention. Yet experience shows that it can hardly be in-

sisted upon too strongly. If the student can remember but one statement in this chapter, let it be this: Know what you are writing about. In the work of one who knows his subject there is always something worth while; in that of one who does not, there is usually nothing of profit. It has been well said that "a thing superficially perceived or half explained might as well not be explained at all."[1] Yet students are often tempted to explain matters of which their knowledge is glaringly superficial, matters of which they themselves stand in quite as much need of explanation as do their readers. A student has spent an hour or so at a blast furnace; he has seen ore dumped in at the top of the furnace and a stream of molten metal coming out at the bottom and running along channels cut in the sandy floor. Knowing nothing of the subject beyond what he has observed during this visit to a blast furnace, he writes a paper purporting to tell "How Pig Iron Is Made." He has seen enough to write a description of the appearance of the furnace, of the activity of the molders when the furnace-gate is opened and the red metal jets forth, and so on, but unless he is a genius he has not seen enough to enable him to explain the process. His theme will in some degree resemble the account given by a young woman who had visited a locomotive works:

> You pour a lot of sand into a lot of boxes, and you throw old stove lids and things into the furnace, and then you turn the red-hot stream into a hole in the sand, and everybody yells and shouts.
>
> Then you pour it out, let it cool and pound it, and then you put it in a thing that bores holes in it. Then you screw it together, and paint it, and put steam in it, and it goes splendidly, and they take it to a drafting-room and make a blueprint of it.
>
> But one thing I forgot—they have to make a boiler. One man gets inside and one gets outside, and they pound frightfully, and then they tie it to the other thing, and you ought to see it go!

[1] C. D. Stewart, *Chicago Spiders.*

Instead of being content with his superficial observations the student who wants to write on the manufacture of pig iron should consult technical works on the subject, compare different kinds of furnaces, different methods of treatment, and thus get at the essentials. Then, if necessary, he should revisit the blast furnace and observe more carefully the operations that may still be hazy to him. When he has done these things he will probably be able to tell "How Pig Iron Is Made." The path to knowledge has its arduous slopes, but the testimony of those who have traveled farthest along it shows that it is worth following.

EXERCISES

1. Why is exposition the most useful type of writing for the average person to study?

2. Can you think of any kind of exposition not mentioned on pages 105-106?

3. Prepare yourself to explain orally to the class the statement that "one great advantage of the study and practice of exposition is that it urges the student to take stock of the amount and quality of his knowledge." Have with you an outline written on a card or slip of paper; be definite rather than vague and general; and talk for about two minutes.

4. In what fields of knowledge or activity have you sufficient information for the purposes of exposition? Make a list of these fields for class discussion.

5. Find a short exposition in which there is evidence that the writer has a sufficient knowledge of his subject. Find another in which this evidence is lacking. If the quest for the latter grows difficult, look among articles on "scientific" subjects in cheap magazines and Sunday newspapers—A New Cancer Cure, Is Mars Inhabited? The Future of the Gyroscope, etc.—among financial articles in the papers, forecasts of the stock-market especially, and among ordinary newspaper book-reviews. Tell the class the reasons for your judgment in each case.

II. The Logical Processes of Exposition

Exposition is addressed to the intellect. Its fundamental logical processes are two in number: (1) Definition and (2) Division. To know what these processes are and how to make use of them is good preparation for writing sound exposition.

(1) *Definition*

The meaning of definition. A term is a word or group of words which is used as the symbol of any object of thought, such as a thing, a relation, a quality, an institution, a process, or an idea. "Rotor ship," "the right of visit and search," "electron," "atomic theory," "Longfellow's *Evangeline*," and "democracy" are terms because they stand for single objects of thought. Now definition is the process of fixing the meaning of a term. Defining is in one respect like marking the boundaries of a plot of land: when the boundaries have been fixed, we say all the land within them belongs to So-and-So; when a term has been defined, all the objects to which the definition may properly be applied are included in the meaning of the term.

The need of definition. Definition is essential to exposition. We cannot explain unless we know what it is that we are explaining; nor can we derive much value from an explanation unless we know what it is that is being explained. If we would write an exposition on the subject, say, of "ethane," we must first of all know what ethane is. A paper on the "Economies of the Rotor Ship" would not be enlightening to many readers unless it included a definition of "rotor ship." But while definition is essential, it may be tacit rather than expressed. If a writer has good reason for believing that the subject of his exposition is already clearly defined in the minds of his readers, he may dispense

with a statement of the definition and rely on the assumed common understanding. Thus in a criticism of Longfellow's *Evangeline* written for ordinarily well-informed readers it would doubtless be unnecessary to write out a definition of "Longfellow's *Evangeline*"; the definition could simply be taken for granted. A careful writer will not, of course, take an important definition for granted unless he has sound reason to think that there will be no vagueness or misunderstanding as a result of the omission. The italicized words in the following quotation need not be defined for artillerymen; for all others they should be:

> In *indirect laying*, when using *battery salvos*, the *initial deflection* should be determined to the right of the target and for the *second piece*.[1]

If a term has more than one meaning, vagueness may result from the lack of an expressed definition. Thoughtful writers guard against such a possibility:

> *Theatric* does not necessarily mean *sensational*, *melodramatic*, *artificial*. It should mean, and it will be so used in this book, *adapted for the purpose of the theater*.[2]

Manifestly, if a writer uses a term with one of its meanings in mind and a reader gets from that term another of its meanings, there has been a failure in the communication of thought. Fortunately, most of the terms in common use are for ordinary purposes sufficiently defined by their context.[3] But even so, one attains clearness only by being constantly alert to the possibilities of misinterpretation. Whenever there is apt to be vagueness in a reader's understanding of a term, definition is needed.

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[1]Captains Moretti and Danford, *Notes on Training Field Artillery Details*.
[2]George Pierce Baker, *Dramatic Technique*.
[3]Cf. "Smith was *conditioned* in chemistry last semester," and "A horse is *conditioned* by proper exercise, proper food, and proper grooming."

Means of definition. There are many ways of defining, varying greatly in their degrees of exactness and completeness. At one extreme is the definition framed by the scientist, who tries to express the exact nature of the object defined. At the other extreme is the popular definition, which may be no more than a hint as to which one of two meanings the writer has in mind. Each is useful in its place. An incomplete popular definition might have little or no value in a strictly scientific or technical paper; an elaborate scientific definition such as the following might be worth little in a popular essay:

> The Ostropaceae are a family of ascomycetous saprophytic fungi of the order *Hysteriales* with the ascocarps, which have thick blackish walls, immersed at first in the host but erumpent at maturity.

The purpose of the exposition and the audience for whom it is written should determine the mode of definition.

(1) *Definition by synonyms.* A rough and ready method of defining is to give synonyms or equivalent phrases for the term to be defined. This method is used commonly in dictionaries. It has the merit of brevity, but owing to the fact that English has few perfect synonyms the method may sometimes be highly misleading if it is the only one used. It is especially satisfactory when need arises of pointing out which of two or more familiar meanings is given to a word. If we say "object, in the sense of aim, purpose, or end," the meaning of "object" is sufficiently defined for most practical purposes.

(2) *Definition by comparison.* Definition by comparison goes a step further than definition by synonyms—carries on the process that the giving of synonyms has begun. We wish to define A, and we cite B and C, which resemble A, and then point out the ways in which A and B and C

differ or agree. By this means it is possible to disclose shades of meaning that would otherwise escape attention. It follows that the more closely the things compared resemble one another, the finer will be the distinction between them.

An example of simple comparison, in which the aim is to distinguish two meanings of the same term, follows:

> The word *law* . . . means, in one field, a prescribed rule of action, something imposed from without and having a binding force, as a civil law. In the natural sciences, on the other hand, a law is simply a statement of the way in which things do invariably behave. Obviously, one who carries over into the consideration of natural phenomena the conception of law employed in legal practice, is liable to have a very mistaken view of Nature.[1]

Here the comparison is briefly stated, with no attempt to elaborate or draw out the contrast. In the next example, we see a comparison treated with some elaboration:

> The grand mistake of the Renaissance schools lay in supposing that science and art were the same things, and that to advance in the one was necessarily to perfect the other. Whereas they are, in reality, things not only different, but so opposed that to advance in the one is, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, to retrograde in the other. This is the point to which I would at present especially bespeak the reader's attention.
>
> Science and art are commonly distinguished by the nature of their actions; the one as knowing, the other as changing, producing, or creating. But there is a still more important distinction in the nature of the things they deal with. Science deals exclusively with things as they are in themselves; and art exclusively with things as they affect the human senses and human soul. Her work is to portray the appearances of things, and to deepen the natural impressions which they produce upon living creatures. The work of science is to substitute facts for appearances, and demonstrations for impressions. Both, observe, are equally concerned with truth; the one with truth of aspect, the other with truth of essence. Art

[1]Adam Leroy Jones, *Logic: Inductive and Deductive.*

does not represent things falsely, but truly as they appear to mankind. Science studies the relations of things to each other; but art studies only their relations to man; and it requires of everything which is submitted to it imperatively this, and only this—what that thing is to the human eyes and human heart, what it has to say to men, and what it can become to them: a field of question just as much vaster than that of science, as the soul is larger than the material creation.

Take a single instance. Science informs us that the sun is ninety-five millions of miles distant from, and one hundred eleven times broader than, the earth: that we and all the planets revolve round it; and that it revolves on its own axis in twenty-five days, fourteen hours, and four minutes. With all this, art has nothing whatsoever to do. It has no care to know anything of this kind. But the things which it does care to know are these: that in the heavens God hath set a tabernacle for the sun, "which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof."[1]

The greater part of the following definition is not comparison, but comparison is effectively used to emphasize the meaning already given to the term; omit the comparison between "recreation" and "so-called recreation" and the force of the paragraph is lessened:

With a view, then, of obtaining some such intelligent understanding of recreation, let us begin by clearly understanding what recreation means. First of all, the mere word, like many of our other English words that signify abstractions, condenses much philosophy within itself. For, as "creation" means a forming, "re-creation" means a forming anew; and, as in etymological derivation, so in actual truth re-creation is nothing other than a re-novation of the vital energies; leisure time and appropriate employment serve to repair the organic machinery which has been impaired by the excess of work. The literal meaning of the word is therefore in itself instructive, as showing that what our forefathers saw in recreation was not so much play, pastime, or pleas-

[1] Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice.*

antry, as the restoration of enfeebled powers of work. And I do not know that within the limits of one word they could have left us a legacy of thought more true in itself or more solemn in its admonition. Recreation is, *or ought to be*, not a pastime entered upon for the sake of the pleasure which it affords, but an act of duty undertaken for the sake of the subsequent power which it generates, and the subsequent profit which it insures. Therefore, expanding the philosophy which is thus condensed in our English word, we may define recreation as that which with the least expenditure of time renders the exhausted energies most fitted to resume their work. Such is my definition of recreation; yet I know that many things are called by this name which cannot possibly fall within this definition, and I doubt whether nine persons out of ten ever dreamed either of attaching such a meaning to the word, or of applying such a principle to the thing. Nevertheless, I also know that in whatever degree so-called recreation fails to be covered by this definition, in that degree does it fail, properly speaking, to be recreation at all. It may be amusement, fun, or even profitable employment; but it is not that particular thing which it is the object of this paper to consider. Therefore the definition which I have laid down may be taken as a practical test of recreation as genuine or spurious. If recreation is of a kind that renders a man less fitted for work than would some other kind of occupation, or if it consumes more time than would some other kind of occupation which would secure an equal amount of recuperation, then, in whatever degree this is so, in that degree must the quality of such recreation be pronounced impure.[1]

(3) *Definition by examples.* One of the most useful ways of making a term intelligible is to cite examples of the objects that it includes. It is not possible by this means alone to fix the limits of the term precisely, but it is possible to help the reader recognize common and typical members of the group which the term embraces. When we say that the term *Felis* is applied to such animals as the tiger, lion, panther, leopard, puma, and domestic cat, we have in a way defined it. This mode of definition has the force and

[1]G. J. Romanes, *The Science and Philosophy of Recreation.*

liveliness which come from putting the concrete in place of the abstract; it gives the mind tangible ideas to work upon. In the following illustration the writer is defining "forced option" and "avoidable option":

If I say to you: "Choose between going out with your umbrella or without it," I do not offer you a genuine option, for it is not forced. You can easily avoid it by not going out at all. Similarly, if I say, "Either love me or hate me," "Either call my theory true or call it false," your option is avoidable. You may remain indifferent to me, neither loving nor hating, and you may decline to offer any judgment as to my theory. But if I say, "Either accept this truth or go without it," I put on you a forced option, for there is no standing place outside of the alternative.[1]

(4) *Definition by description.* If a term stands for one individual object only, as do such terms as "General Winfield Scott," "The Supreme Court of the United States," and "Vineyard Sound," it may be defined with the greatest exactness by a description of the object. In this way "Vineyard Sound" is defined in the *United States Coast Pilot,* Part III:

Vineyard Sound joins Nantucket Sound northward of West Chop and extends southwestward between the south shore of Cape Cod and the Elizabeth Islands on the north and Martha's Vineyard on the south, its western limit being a line from Gay Head to Cuttyhunk. The sound is about seventeen miles long and the width varies from seven miles to a little less than three miles abreast Nobska Point Lighthouse, its narrowest part.

This description is so precise that it could not be applied to any other body of water in the world; Vineyard Sound alone, of all possible objects, can meet its specifications. This quality of being applicable only to the single object described is the essential of exact definition by description.

[1]William James, *The Will to Believe.*

Much less exact as definition than the accurate description of the unique object, but far richer in literary possibilities, is description of the type as opposed to the individual, of the characteristics of a group or class or kind. What, for instance, is a "good Chautauqua town"? According to one writer here are some of its ear-marks:

> I might have known that I was in a good Chautauqua town. The prevalence of toothpicks was a hint. The canned food at that "eating place" in a region conspicuous for its fertile farms was another. The popularity of soggy pie and chicoried coffee was a third. The difficulty of getting a glass of fresh milk was a fourth. But best of all was the complete absence of olive oil. Some day a sociologist may explain to the world the connection between civilization and the use of olive oil. Count upon it, if ever you find yourself in a region of husbandmen where the town's hotel offers canned vegetables in summer, if ever you stumble into a land of dairies whose inhabitants take their "cup o' cawfee" with condensed milk, above all, if fate ever leads you to where the rare (oh, very rare!) offering of fresh greens is seasoned with vinegar and sugar in place of olive oil, then, indeed *then*, you may know you are in the chosen pastures of Chautauqua.[1]

As long as the writer keeps to details that are typical of the class or group as a whole, his description will serve as definition.

(5) *Definition by classification.* If a term stands for an indefinite number of objects of the same kind, as in the case of "soldier," "court of justice," and "sound" (a body of water), it cannot be exactly defined by description. We could not define "sound" precisely by giving a description of each individual sound known—Long Island Sound, Norton Sound, Kotzebue Sound, Ossabaw Sound, and so on throughout the world. If we did that, we should be defining the terms "Long Island Sound," etc., quite exactly,

[1]Gregory Mason, "Chautauqua; Its Technic," *American Mercury*, March, 1924.

perhaps, but defining the general term "sound" only roughly by means of examples. And no matter how long our list of examples might be, it would not be complete, for such a term stands for all possible objects of a given kind.

In Plato's *Euthyphro* Socrates asks Euthyphro, who claims to have a precise knowledge of the subject, "What is piety and what is impiety?" The reply is, "Piety is doing as I am doing; that is to say, prosecuting anyone who is guilty of murder, sacrilege, or of any other crime—whether he be your father or mother or some other person, that makes no difference;—and not prosecuting them is impiety." But Socrates is not satisfied with this. "Remember," he says, "that I did not ask you to give me two or three examples of piety, but to explain the general idea which makes all pious things to be pious." In other words, what quality must things possess in order to be called pious? When we ask for a definition of a term we wish to know what qualities a thing must have in order to make the term applicable.[1]

We obtain this knowledge when we learn (1) the class of objects to which the thing denoted by the term belongs (=the *genus*), and (2) just how it differs from the other members of the class (=the *differentia*). Parallels, for instance, are defined exactly when we say that they are "lines in the same plane which will not meet however far they are produced in either direction." "Lines in the same plane" is the class of objects to which parallels belong. But as intersecting lines belong in this same class, it is necessary to point out in what way parallel lines differ from intersecting lines. This is done by saying that parallels "will not meet however far they are produced in either direction." To take another example, the gunnery term "site" is exactly defined as "the angle between a horizontal plane and a right line joining the muzzle of the gun and the target." "Site" is classified as an angle, and this at once

[1]Adam Leroy Jones, *Logic: Inductive and Deductive.*

limits the meaning of the term. But as there are many sorts of angles, the definition must go on to distinguish "site" from all other angles.

In framing a definition of this sort our aim is accuracy, and therefore we must guard against:

(*a*) *Making it too narrow.* It is too narrow if it excludes anything that the term is meant to cover. "A rectangle is a quadrilateral plane figure having its angles right angles and its sides equal" is a faulty definition because it excludes all rectangles that are not squares.

(*b*) *Making it too broad.* It is too broad if it includes anything the term is not meant to cover. "A sound is a narrow passage of water" is too broad because it includes rivers.

(*c*) *Using vague or needlessly obscure language.* "Logic is the Baedeker of the world of thought." This is certainly suggestive, but it could not be used as a precise definition of logic. Figures of speech have no place in exact definition by means of *genus* and *differentia.* "A liar is one who willfully misplaces his ontological predicates." Such a definition uses needlessly difficult language. It is no more precise than "A liar is one who willfully states as true that which he knows to be false," and is more difficult to understand. The language of a definition should be as simple as is consistent with precision.

(*d*) *Using in the definition the term to be defined or a synonym or derivative of it.* "An organism is an organized body peculiar to organic beings"; "A cause is that which causes an effect"; "A Christian is one who possesses the spiritual character proper to a Christian." These are as absurd in their way as saying that a foot is a unit of linear measure equal in length to one half of two feet. They move in a sort of charmed circle from which are barred all those who do not already understand the term to be defined.

(2) *Division*

The meaning of division. The mental process of division corresponds to the physical process of sorting. The apple grower does not lump his fruit all together, putting it into bins or barrels just as it happens to come, Baldwins, greenings, russets, pippins, all packed together indiscriminately. Instead, he sorts it, or keeps the different kinds separate. He goes further than this, grading the apples of a particular kind, selecting some to be wrapped in paper and carefully packed in boxes, some to be barreled, and some to be made into cider. Similarly, in making a division the various objects signified by a given term are sorted into groups, the members of each group having in common some quality that marks them off from the other groups. The "voters of the United States," for example, might be divided into native-born and naturalized, or into Republicans, Democrats, Socialists, etc. In either case the groups are distinct from one another and the members of each group have in common the quality which marks off their group from the others.

The basis of division. The first step in making a division is to choose some characteristic which will distinguish certain members of the group from the others. This characteristic is known as the "basis of division." In the division of voters into Republicans, Democrats, etc., the basis of division is political preference. If the division is to be complete, a place must be made in it for each known political preference.

It is well to bear in mind, while fixing upon the basis of division in any given case, the fact that there are probably several different ways in which the group may usefully be divided. We have seen that the voters of the United States may be divided according to their politics or their birth (that is, native-born or naturalized); they may be divided, also, according to their incomes, occupations,

education, or sex, and in several other ways. The soldiers of the United States army may be divided according to their several ranks, as commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates; or according to the branch of service to which they belong, as infantry, artillery, cavalry, engineer corps, and so forth. English literature may be divided according to historical periods, as Elizabethan, Jacobean, Restoration, Queen Anne, etc.; or according to literary types, as the epic, the drama, the novel, the essay, the lyric, etc.; or according to its temper, as classic, romantic, realistic, etc. Natural phenomena, from the point of view of the chemist, may be divided into the organic and the inorganic; from that of the physicist, into the phenomena of matter and the phenomena of force; from that of the psychologist, into the objective and the subjective.

Once adopted, the basis of division should be kept throughout the entire division. It will not do to divide citizens into Democrats, Methodists, Episcopalians, Republicans, and so on. In a medley of this sort more than one basis of division has been employed; men are divided not only on the basis of political preference but upon that of religious preference as well. This makes for confusion. The logical trouble with mixed divisions is that they do not really separate objects into distinct groups; thus, in the foregoing, a citizen might belong to two of the groups, for he might be both a Democrat and a Methodist. In a good division there is no overlapping. If the division is meant to be thorough, a place must be found for each individual member of the group. If any member of the group cannot be placed, the division is incomplete and must be carried on further. A division of American voters, for example, which provided places only for those who belonged to a political party would be incomplete, as it would leave no room for the independent voter.

The purpose of division. The purpose of all literary applications of division is to simplify the subject under discussion. Through division we analyze a whole into its parts and thereby gain a clearer grasp of it. The practical value of the apple-grower's analysis of his crop is evident; so is the value of the metallurgist's analysis of a specimen of ore, and the chemist's analysis of a sample of drinking-water. To one who stops to think, the value of analysis in exposition will be manifest also. It should be obvious that if we are to explain, let us say, the process of getting pictures by photography, we take a real step toward clearness when we divide the process into separate or clearly-marked stages of progress—for example, (1) taking the picture, or making the exposure; (2) developing the sensitized plate, or making a negative; and (3) making the print, or finished picture. This division gives us the main heads for our essay. Or, to look at division from the reader's point of view, let us suppose we desire information on the propagation of plants and that the book or article to which we turn presents us with such an adequate division of the subject as this: (1) seedage, or growing plants from seeds; (2) separation and division, or multiplying plants by means of separated roots, etc.; (3) layerage, or multiplying by means of shoots or runners which take root while still attached to the parent plant; (4) cuttage, or multiplying by means of slips or cuttings which take root when separated from the parent plant; and (5) graftage, or causing a part of one plant to grow on another plant.[1] This gives us a helpful lift on our way to understanding the subject. It opens up the subject for us as a map opens up a strange country for the traveler, and enables us to take our bearings. Without it we should have to wander on as best we could until finally, if our zeal and patience held out long enough, we

[1]This division and the terms are taken from Professor Bailey's *Nursery-Book*.

could make a division for ourselves. But in every case the duty of making the division rests upon the writer.

Incomplete division. Division is carried out to the fullest extent possible if the aim is to treat a subject exhaustively or to give an inclusive survey of it. Scientific treatises, scholarly works of all kinds, and full directions for doing or making something are usually based on as complete a division as the subject permits. But if the writer means to confine himself to a portion of his subject or to a partial view of it, he does not need to carry his division any further than that portion or partial view takes him. The practical purpose of the composition determines whether the division shall be more or less complete. A bird-book, for instance, that aims to be scientific must be based on complete division; a bird-book that aims to be a popular guide need not be. In the one book, every known bird within the scope of the volume would be recorded; in the other, only those birds likely to be seen by an ordinary observer. In everyday writing any division is sufficient which helps forward the writer's purpose and aids him to be clear.

If there is any likelihood that a reader might mistake a partial division for a full one, he should, in the interests of clearness, be given a warning. This may be done sometimes by the title: if the title of a popular bird-book were *Some Common Birds of Orchard and Garden*, or *Everyday Bird Neighbors*, further warning would probably be unnecessary. Sometimes a hint in the introduction is enough:

> The want of the times and the propriety of this anniversary concur to draw attention to the doctrine of Literary Ethics. What I have to say on that doctrine distributes itself under the topics of the resources, the subject, and the discipline of the scholar.[1]

[1]Emerson, "Literary Ethics."

In other cases, an explicit statement may seem preferable:

Two important phases of the subject under discussion cannot be treated specifically in this paper, and one closely-related phase of education, equally important, cannot be discussed at all. I shall be able to refer only incidentally to industrial education for girls, and to agricultural education for boys and girls and I shall have to omit all discussion of commercial education.[1]

By such means candid relations are established between writer and reader, and these are as valuable in exposition as in friendly social intercourse.

EXERCISES

1. Find an example of definition by synonyms in a textbook.

2. Employ each of the following words in a separate sentence, defining each word by synonyms: *trope, banal, integument, ancillary, port-cochère, Hesperus, forestall, ricochet, nexus, jingo.* Read your sentences to the class for criticism.

3. Write a paragraph or two on one of the following pairs of words, making clear the meaning of one of the terms by comparing it with the other and drawing distinctions:

(*a*) Farm—plantation.
(*b*) Scholarship—pedantry.
(*c*) Poverty—pauperism.
(*d*) Absolute monarchy—limited monarchy.
(*e*) College—university.
(*f*) Politician—statesman.
(*g*) Epic poetry—dramatic poetry.
(*h*) Wisdom—culture.
(*i*) Direct current—alternating current.
(*j*) Ethics—religion.
(*k*) Industrialism—feudalism.

4. Define the following terms by means of examples: *household furniture, weapons, vehicle, buildings, Lepidoptera, primates.* Do you find any of your own or your classmates' definitions unsatisfactory? Why?

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[1]Paul Hanus, "Industrial Education."

5. Bring to class for discussion a definition by description.

6. Define by description two of the following terms:

(*a*) The town or city in which you live.
(*b*) Lake Erie.
(*c*) The Ohio River.
(*d*) The United States Naval Academy.
(*e*) Cuba.
(*f*) Oliver Goldsmith.

7. Can you define "automobile" in a single sentence so as to exclude locomotives, traction-engines, and steam-rollers?

8. What terms among the following can you define by means of genus and differentia?—*poetry, art, gravitation, literature, electricity, baseball, pasture, apple, book, humor, thunder-storm, poverty, courage, honor, gossip, undergraduate, vegetable.*

9. How would you undertake to give a clear idea of such terms among the foregoing as you cannot satisfactorily define by classification? Test your theories by writing a paragraph on one of these terms.

10. Mention as many bases of division as you can for each of the following groups: *animals, automobiles, rifles, trees, horses, schools, weapons, electric devices.* Divide each group.

11. Criticize the following divisions:

(*a*) *Ships*
sailing-ships
battleships
side-wheelers
steamships
freighters
liners

(*b*) *Vehicles*
horse-drawn
phaetons
victorias
automobiles
airplanes
hay-wagons

(*c*) *Governments*
monarchal
autocratic
republics
democracies
imperialistic
hereditary

(*d*) *The works of Shakespeare*
poems
sonnets
plays
tragedies
chronicle history plays
plays based on Roman history

12. Write out a division of one of the following subjects—that is, indicate the main heads of an essay—and state briefly the point of view or purpose of the essay. Compare your analysis with other analyses made by the class.

(*a*) What the World War cost the United States.
(*b*) The poetry of John Milton.
(*c*) Samuel Adams and the American Revolution.
(*d*) The Department of State.
(*e*) Recent tendencies in immigration.
(*f*) The treatment of pacifists in the United States during the European war.
(*g*) Traffic on the Great Lakes.
(*h*) California as a winter resort.
(*i*) A modern agricultural school.
(*j*) The Yellowstone National Park.
(*k*) A model gymnasium.

13. What basis of division is used in "How a Gas Engine Works," page 601?

14. You have defined the term "automobile" (Exercise 7); have classified the objects denoted by the term (Exercise 10): putting your definition and classification together, how would you go to work to write a paper on automobiles? Explain orally to the class what you would try to accomplish and by what means.

15. Tell the class of an instance of incomplete division that you have found, and state the means by which the writer informs you that it is incomplete.

III. Descriptive Exposition

Introductory. In the two preceding sections we have learned something of the nature of exposition and of its two underlying logical processes. With this knowledge as a basis we shall now consider three of the most generally useful types of expository writing—Descriptive Exposition, Process Exposition, and Exposition of Ideas. We shall follow this order, which is, for the majority of us, the order of increasing difficulty.

The aim of descriptive exposition. In descriptive exposition (often called "scientific description") the aim is to give the specifications of an object, or to enumerate its parts, or to state its characteristics and qualities for utilitarian or scientific purposes. The following quotation is an example of exposition of this type:

> The Crown is a four-section folding tripod, absolutely rigid, quickly set up, and readily adjusted for height. It is made of selected straight-grained cherry, soaked in an oil bath for ten days before being finished. The wood is then rubbed down and shellacked. This treatment renders it extremely tough and practically waterproof.
>
> For carrying, the lower sections telescope into the third, and the upper section folds back upon it, making it very compact.
>
> All binding screws on the lower sections of this tripod are "upset" and cannot be lost. Taper pins in the ear pieces of the head fit snugly into metal-tipped sockets of the legs, preventing loose joints and side play.
>
> Expansion brackets in the upper section make it impossible for the legs to be detached from the head until the brackets are folded.[1]

Chief uses of descriptive exposition. Pure description has repeatedly been called the "handmaid" of narration; with equal aptness descriptive exposition may be called the handmaid of other kinds of exposition. As a means of giving concreteness and amplitude to exposition it is in constant use. It has special uses of its own, also, and comprises the bulk of field manuals of ornithology, botany, geology, and so on, of guide-books, motorists' "blue-books," "coast pilots," and other works in which accurate identification of objects or places is of prime importance. The descriptions of criminals filed away in police archives, the descriptions of property in deeds of sale, mortgages, and other legal documents, the descriptions of stage-settings in

[1]Graflex Catalogue, 1916.

"acting copies" of plays (intended to enable the stage manager to reproduce exactly a particular scene), are other forms of the same kind of writing.

Descriptive exposition compared with pure description. Descriptive exposition shades off into pure description. But as descriptive exposition is essentially a mode of conveying information, it is treated here rather than in the chapter on description proper. Just how the two differ in aim and method may be gathered from the following comparison. An American scientist is exploring the jungles of the Amazon. He gets a specimen of a bird which is quite unknown to him, and suspects that it is a new variety. In a letter to his wife he describes the bird, telling her that it is a little larger than a robin, is a very conspicuous and gaudy fellow with a breast as brilliant as a tanager's, with wings and back that flash like an opal in the sunshine. His object in this letter is to give his wife as vivid an idea as possible of the things he is doing and seeing, to help her understand what his life is like down there in South America. To a friend in the American Museum of Natural History, in New York, he also sends a description of the bird. This time he does not write "a little larger than a robin," but states that his specimen measured 11.25 inches. He gives other dimensions, such as wing spread, length of tail, bill, etc., with equal accuracy. He consults his color-chart and painstakingly sets down the precise shades to be found on the different parts of the bird's plumage. And so he goes on, giving all the details which could possibly help his friend in identifying the specimen. His object is to describe the bird so exactly that his description could not apply to any other kind of bird. His friend, by comparing this description point by point with similar descriptions of birds of the same general type and habitat, or with specimens preserved in the museum, should be able to determine whether

or not the explorer has discovered a new species. The first of these descriptions would be pure description; the second, descriptive exposition.

The method of descriptive exposition. Enumeration of details is the method of descriptive exposition—a specification of one fact after another, as in this account of the spring plumage of Townsend's Warbler:

> Crown black, rest of upper parts olive-green spotted with black; a black band through the cheeks bordered above by a yellow superciliary line, below by a yellow stripe on the side of the throat which broadens into a yellow patch on the side of the neck; a yellow spot under eye; tail margined with grayish; both webs of two outer feathers largely white, the inner web of third to fourth feather with white at the end; wings margined with grayish; end half of median coverts white, greater coverts tipped with white, forming two conspicuous bands; throat and upper breast black, lower breast yellow, belly white, sides streaked with black.[1]

Selection as affected by purpose. The enumeration will be more or less exhaustive according as the identification or information desired needs to be complete or only partial. A biologist, in describing a bit of nerve tissue, would probably omit no fact revealed by his microscope. But the compiler of a guide-book, in describing a hotel, would probably limit himself to stating its location, the number of guests it can accommodate, its rates, and the character of the service. The countless other facts about the hotel, such as the color of the decorations in the dining-room, the height of the ceilings, the width of the piazza, and so forth, he would ignore because they would not be helpful to the traveler. A definite purpose and a little common sense will keep the writer of descriptive exposition from including irrelevant details; will enable him, in other words, to determine how exhaustive his enumeration should be.

[1] Frank M. Chapman, *The Warblers of North America*, p. 154.

Purpose cannot be divorced from consideration of one's audience; here, as in other kinds of writing, the audience helps to define the scope and character of the work. In describing, let us say, Rockland, Maine, for the tourist, one would deal with hotels, points of interest, means of conveyance from one place to another, and trips to outlying islands and neighboring towns. In describing Rockland for the master of a vessel, one would give the bearings of buoys and lighthouses, the depth of water at low tide in various portions of the harbor, the character of the anchorage, and the facilities for obtaining fresh water and ship's stores. Hardly a fact about this small seaport which would be mentioned in one description would be appropriate to the other. They would differ, too, in degrees of minuteness and accuracy. The distances and directions mentioned in the first would not need to be more than approximate; those of the second would need to be exact, for a slight error might mean the loss of a ship and crew. Thus direction, for instance, would be sufficiently indicated, in the one case, in the statement that "Three and a half miles north of Rockland is the village of Rockport, with picturesque lime-kilns and quarry." In the other, direction would be more carefully specified: "When Fisherman Island bears WSW. ¾ W., distant about 2 miles, steer N. by W. ¾ W., passing about ⅜ mile eastward of Munroe Island and Owls Head Lighthouse."

Arrangement. It is plain that descriptive exposition is a very simple type of writing, yet even so it should be orderly. In describing an object it is generally best to give first the larger outlines, the facts which at first glance would be most conspicuous. This is the natural order. When we first see a table, for example, our eyes take in such broad features as its shape, whether round, square, oblong, or oval; its color; and the form of its legs, whether

turned or squared. Later examination may show us that the hair-line of inlay outlining the drawer is composed of minute pieces of holly alternating with satin-wood, that the top is built up of cross layers of mahogany veneer, and that the upper portions of the legs are decorated with a characteristic Hepplewhite wreath in marquetry; but we do not see such details the instant we set eyes on the table. Having given the larger facts, the smaller should be made to follow in the order of their importance, or, where this is not readily discernible, in an order of convenience.

Some classification of details is essential to a clear and usable scientific description; facts of a similar kind should be grouped together. The following extract from the *United States Coast Pilot,* descriptive of Rockland Harbor, is so organized:

> This harbor, one of the most important in Penobscot Bay, is on the west shore about eight miles northeastward of Whitehead, between Owls Head on the south and Jamesons Point on the north. It affords anchorage for the largest vessels, but is somewhat exposed to easterly winds; northeasterly winds raise a heavy sea in the southwestern part, but shelter may be found behind the breakwater, which extends three-fourths of a mile in a southerly direction from Jamesons Point, and is about four feet above high water. Rockland Breakwater Lighthouse marks the end of the breakwater. The city of Rockland, on the western shore of the harbor, has a large trade in lime. Several lines of steamers touch here, and a number of small steamers ply to the islands in the bay. The usual draft of vessels entering Rockland for cargoes is about twelve feet. Some of the wharves are dry, or nearly so, at low water, but there is from six to fifteen feet alongside the principal ones, according to location. The bottom is soft mud, and some vessels lie aground at low water while loading and unloading.
>
> Rockland is the terminus of a branch of the Maine Central Railroad which connects with the main line at Bath.
>
> [There follows a paragraph listing prominent objects and landmarks by means of which the helmsman can lay his course.]

Anchorages.—Vessels anchor anywhere in the harbor where the depth and bottom are suitable, taking care to keep 300 yards from the end of Tillson's wharf, and leaving a clear channel for the steamboats landing at this wharf.

Pilots are not necessary to enter or leave this harbor, but if desired they can be found off Monhegan or Matinicus, or on any of the fishing vessels off the mouth of the bay. There are no regularly licensed pilots for this port.

Supplies.—Anthracite and bituminous coal can be obtained alongside the wharves. Fresh water can be obtained alongside Tillson's wharf or from a water boat. Provisions and some ship chandler's stores can be had in the city.

Repairs.—There are two marine railways, one capable of hauling out vessels of 600 tons, the other 400 tons; there are excellent facilities for repairs to wooden sailing vessels and hulls of steamers. Ordinary repairs to machinery can be made here, but Bath is the nearest place affording facilities for extensive repairs. . . .

The grouping here is obvious at a glance, and to anyone consulting such a description, the usefulness of the grouping is equally obvious. First are given those broad general features which characterize the harbor, and then follow the various details all neatly classified. The order is one of convenience, but it will be observed that the various groups combine into two larger divisions: the first, relating to the management of a vessel, includes the paragraphs on landmarks, anchorages, and pilots; the second, relating to ship's necessaries, includes those on supplies, repairs, and medical facilities (this latter paragraph being omitted from our extract for brevity's sake). Similar orderliness will always be found in any good descriptive exposition. Suppose the subject is an automobile: engine, transmission, chassis, and body at once suggest themselves as nuclei about which related details may be gathered. Suppose it is a tree: such topics as bark, wood, winter buds, leaves, flowers, and fruit will afford a convenient scheme for introducing order. Any subject, no matter what, will thus lend itself to a simple division of its parts.

EXERCISES

1. Show how the selection of details would differ in an expository description of a house for (*a*) an insurance agent, (*b*) a person who wanted to recognize the house when he saw it, (*c*) a possible purchaser, and (*d*) a builder who had undertaken to give an estimate of the probable cost of rebuilding it.

2. Make an outline of the way in which you would group the details in 1 (*c*) and (*d*). Read your outline to the class for criticism.

3. Write a brief descriptive exposition of some well-known college character. Choose for your subject a person who has marked characteristics. Use no names or titles. Read your description aloud to see if any members of the class recognize your subject. If no one does, try to account for the failure.

4. Hand in a descriptive exposition (concise but adequate) of one of the following subjects:

(*a*) A Homemade Sleeping-bag
(*b*) An Adequate Camping Outfit
(*c*) A Self-Starter for Automobiles
(*d*) An Automobile Shock-Absorber
(*e*) An Anti-Aircraft Gun
(*f*) An Ingenious Labor-Saving Device
(*g*) A Road Built to Withstand Heavy Motor Traffic
(*h*) A Fountain-Pen

IV. Process Exposition

The aim of process exposition. In process exposition the aim is to tell how something is made or done. This type of exposition is exemplified by the following directions:

The baking of puff paste requires as much care and judgment as the making. After shaping, chill thoroughly before baking. Puff paste requires a hot oven, the greatest heat coming from the bottom, that the paste may rise properly. While the paste is rising, it is often necessary to decrease the heat by lifting the covers or opening the check to stove. Turn the paste frequently, that it may rise evenly. When it has risen its full height, slip a pan under the sheet on which the paste is baking to prevent burning on the bottom. Puff paste should be baked on a tin sheet covered with a double thickness of brown paper.[1]

[1]Fannie M. Farmer, *Boston Cook Book* (slightly altered).

The two uses of process exposition. If an exposition which undertakes to explain how something is made or done is successful, it will either (1) give the reader a general idea of the process or (2) it will do that and in addition give him such information as may enable him to carry on the process himself. The difference in result is chiefly due to difference in the scale of treatment. In an exposition which aims at the former result, the broad outlines of the subject are given, those facts which seem most significant; in one which aims at the latter result, every step is recounted in detail. A general notion of a part of the process of making an etching may be given by saying that a smooth copper or zinc plate is covered with a thin coating of waxy substance known as the "ground"; that the artist then makes his drawing on this ground with a very sharp tool called an "etching-needle"; that wherever he has drawn a line on the ground the surface of the metal plate is exposed; and that when the drawing is completed, the plate is submerged in a dilute acid bath—the "mordant"—where the exposed parts of the plate are corroded, or "bitten," by the acid, and the parts still protected by the ground remain untouched. A comparison of this condensed account with the extract which follows will illustrate the typical difference between the two sorts of process exposition:

Clean the plate thoroughly with a rag and turpentine; and afterwards go over it with a clean cloth charged with whiting, so that no trace of grease or foreign matter of any kind may be left upon it. Remove all the specks of whiting without touching the surface with your fingers. When the plate comes from the manufacturer it usually has a "mirror finish." It is apparently clean, but if you examine the turpentine rag after applying it to the plate, you will find it somewhat soiled. In order to insure the perfect adherence of the ground it is frequently necessary to reduce the "mirror finish" with turpentine and willow charcoal.

In applying the charcoal, rub it in the direction of its grain.

You will soon find the angle at which it will work. Keep the slight grain made by the charcoal on the copper in the direction of the length of the plate, unless you have a reason for wanting it to run the other way. The charcoaled surface is a little rougher than that left by the buffing wheel on the new plate, and would show a slight gray tint in printing. It can be removed at any time with a felt block and finely-powdered pumice-stone. The "mirror finish" can also be destroyed with emery flour applied with a rag charged with turpentine. In grounding a very highly finished surface you will sometimes discover little bare spots where the ground fails to adhere, no matter how thoroughly and carefully it is applied. You can often avoid this by cleaning off the ground with a rag, while melted, without the use of turpentine, and re-grounding. The best plan, however, is to get rid of the "mirror finish" in the first place, for it will not be desirable at any time.[1]

The one sort of exposition aims to satisfy the natural interest most of us have in the way things are done, whereas the other aims to give us practical help in the doing.

The student should make up his mind beforehand which sort he intends to write, as otherwise his work may not be satisfactory from either point of view. If part of the time he gives minute particulars as though he were aiming at practical guidance and part of the time gives only the more prominent or characteristic facts, his exposition will not hit the mark very cleanly. Readers who desire general information only will find themselves faced with needlessly minute particulars which do not help them forward fast enough, and readers who wish practical guidance will get small help from the parts which give only the broader treatment. In going to work at an exposition on football, for instance, one should ask himself, "Am I to write this for persons who wish to learn how to play the game from my account, or for those who want to know enough about football to make it an interesting game to watch?"

[1]E. H. Reed, *Etching: A Practical Treatise.*

Giving a general idea of a process. We turn now to an example of exposition whose "object is," to quote the author, "to give a general idea of the mode of casting in bronze, rather than to enter into all the details of its varied method as practiced by different artists at various times, and by different founders of our own day, many of whom have adopted special arrangements applicable to the works upon which they may have been engaged":

Before inquiring into the ancient history of works either beaten or cast, it may be well to give a brief description of the more common and general process adopted for casting a statue or other object of considerable size in bronze. When lightness is requisite, as also usually with the view to the economy of metal, such works are not made solid but are cast over a central and removable core. To make this is the first care, and accordingly it is built up to the rude outline, but smaller than the statue or other object to be molded upon it. A material is employed, composed generally of modeling clay mixed with pounded brick and plaster of Paris, in proportions varying with the circumstances and the experience of the artist. When fashioned, it is slowly and carefully dried, the last moisture being driven from it by baking in an oven. Upon this core, which must necessarily correspond with the artist's conception or design for the work he is about to model, and which, in the case of a large statue, is further supported by iron bars and framing, modeling wax is overlaid of a thickness in accordance with the requirements for strength, and having regard to size, action, etc. The sculptor now works upon this wax, modeling his figure to the utmost of his art and with all the elaboration which he wishes to bestow upon the details. It is, in fact, the finished statue as it leaves his hands, but of wax, to be replaced by bronze. Outside this the mold has to be formed, and here also the greatest care is necessary that every minute detail shall be filled in with the composition, without the slightest disturbance to the form, or abrasion of the finished waxen surface. For this purpose the mixture must be somewhat liquid, and evenly applied, care being taken that no air be left in bubbles. It is generally a composition of dried clay and pounded crucibles with some plaster of Paris intimately mixed, ground, sifted, etc., and rubbed up with water

to the consistence of cream. This is first washed upon the surface in a thin coat, penetrating every minute intaglio, and then gradually, as it dries, thickened by other layers until a sufficient substance be obtained. Upon this, again, a stouter coating of coarser quality must be formed to sustain the inner mold and bear the weight of metal. Small rods of bronze have also been previously inserted in the core, which, standing out through the wax, will leave their ends embedded in the mold; the object of these is to sustain both core and mold in their relative positions, without the slightest movement, when the wax form has been melted from between them. The whole, after slow and careful drying, is then firmly fixed in proper position within an oven specially prepared, fire is kindled till the mass is heated, and the wax which was within has flowed out in a liquid state from every corner. Ducts or vents have been made in various places to permit the escape of air, when the liquid metal shall be poured in. We thus have left, thoroughly baked and to be firmly fixed in the casting-pit, bedded in sand, the outer mold, within which the core is steadily sustained, and between them the now empty space which represents the statue. Meanwhile the metal has been duly mixed and fused in its proper furnace, the requisite "ingates," or conduits, have been formed, and the critical moment has arrived.

Who that has read Cellini's graphic account of his difficulties in the casting of the Perseus will not sympathize with the anxieties of the artist, directing all these operations by his own mind, and working at them with his own hand? Who cannot enter into the spirit of this exciting moment on reading Schiller's vivid word picture of the founding of the bell?

The bath of metal, glowing like sunlit gold, is tapped, and the liquid pours steadily into the mold, filling every line and detail which the wax had occupied, closing the ducts by which the air was forced sighing from before it, rising in the vacant space which, open to receive, is now gorged to the full—enough! the bronze is cast. . . .

But woe betide if any moisture has remained within the core of the mold, or if the air vents are insufficient for its escape, mixed with the gaseous emanations from the melted metal; the mold is rent, the work is spoiled, and the liquid fire is vomited forth in scalding showers among the unhappy workmen.

After cooling, the mold has to be broken carefully away, the core raked out, and all projections (as of the rods inserted to con-

nect the core and mold), superfluous metals from the ducts and conduits, and asperities in general, must be removed. The artist's model is there before him, not in wax as he left it, but in a more enduring form. This is the process known as *à la cire perdue*, the almost constant practice for small and for large works by the artists of the Renaissance and earlier ages.[1]

The author has succeeded in giving us a general idea of the casting of a bronze statue by following the process through step by step—the making of the core, the modeling in wax laid over the core, the formation of the mold, the removal of the wax, the pouring of the melted bronze—and by avoiding minute specification. The order is chronological, the most natural and usually most effective order in treating of a process, in which one set of operations regularly succeeds another. It should be noted, however, that the author does not feel bound to make his mention of each step follow absolutely the actual time sequence; having brought us to a certain stage of the proceeding he may turn back for a moment to mention something that was done in an earlier stage. This he does when he says, "Small rods of bronze have been previously inserted in the core." Did he forget to mention these when he was telling about the making of the core? Probably not. Had he mentioned them at that time their purpose would not have been understood so clearly, because the reader could not (unless he knew something of hollow casting) be expected to foresee the relation between core and mold. If the author had mentioned the rods at the point where he was describing the core and had tried to make their use perfectly clear, he would have been forced to get ahead of his story, with some risk of confusion. Strict chronological sequence could have been maintained, however, had he begun his exposition with an outline of the whole process, which would have served to make clear the relation between each operation and the entire process.

[1] C. D. E. Fortnum, *Bronzes* (South Kensington Museum Handbook).

Either method is good, the latter being preferable when the process explained is long and complicated, or when its various stages seem blind and meaningless without constant reference to their relation to the process as a whole. As for specification, enough details are presented to make the explanation sufficiently clear. Had the author given the exact diameter of the "small rods of bronze" and their proper number and location in a six hundred pound casting of a standing human figure, he would not have made their use any clearer but he would have clogged his account with so much "lumber." The same is true of a hundred and one details—of the greatest importance to those who are making a casting—which the author has sensibly omitted.

Giving directions for guidance. We come now to exposition which aims at practical guidance, and it is pertinent to ask whether or not such writing can be expected to give complete guidance in all cases. It cannot. In most of the arts and handicrafts and, generally speaking, in all processes which call for special skill of hand or eye the experience gained through working with someone who knows is necessary to success. If one wants to learn to sail a boat or break a colt, it is wise to begin in company with a man who can sail or who understands horses. But if the process does not call for trained judgment or skill and is not likely to be dangerous for a beginner, a set of directions will readily serve the purpose. The point for the student of composition to consider is whether in choosing a subject he ought not to select one which is likely to give good results if the directions are followed by the reader intelligently and conscientiously. If good results are not likely to follow, would he not do better to try to give a general idea of the process and stop with that? This assumes, of course, that he is writing for the beginner. But should the student himself be an expert, he may write for

those who already have some proficiency and give them information which they will know how to apply. On this basis the following directions are addressed to cavalrymen:

> Jumping on the longe is a perfect lesson to train a horse for obstacles. Drilled by this method, the horse is cool and clever and forms the habit of observing the obstacle. It is the best system for service mounts and hunters.
>
> This lesson may be given in the hall or in the open and in the following manner:
>
> High Jumps.—Place a bar on the ground. Holding the longe in one hand and the snaffle reins in the other, lead the horse and step over the bar with him several times in succession in both directions. When the horse no longer shows hesitation, move away from him a little, put him on a circle and make him cross the bar on the longe. Later the bar is gradually raised.
>
> To give the lesson properly, it is necessary:
>
> (1) To let the horse assume, at a short distance from bar, whatever gait suits him, and immediately after he jumps to make him resume the original gait of the circle.
>
> (2) To take up the horse on the longe again, *gently* return him to the circle and to the original gait.
>
> (3) To advance a step or two toward the obstacle and to open the fingers, so that the longe may slip through the hand while the horse is approaching his jump and will not be too taut when he leaps; he must never be hampered, but must have complete liberty.
>
> It is a good plan to practice the horse in jumping on the longe at a walk before trying him at the trot and gallop. At the walk the horse can best estimate the jump and the amount of effort necessary to clear it; at the walk he also learns how best to assist himself with his head and neck.[1]

Exposition which thus supplements practice may be well worth while, as are the examples we have looked at. If the student writes for those who are uninformed on his subject, his common sense will tell him whether or not his exposition is likely to be useful; if he writes for those who already have

[1] *Notes on Equitation*, translated from the French by Maj. G. H. Cameron, U.S.A.

some information, it will tell him whether or not he knows enough to add to their information. Efficiency demands that common sense be given a chance at the outset.

Of the efficiency of the following directions, addressed to any person of ordinary intelligence, there is no question:

EXCELLENT INK.—Four ounces of the best and soundest Aleppo nut-galls. Two ounces of green copperas. Two ounces of the best gum-arabic. Half an ounce of alum. Two ounces of logwood chips. A tablespoonful of cloves, heaped up. A large quart of boiling water.

The nut-galls, copperas, gum-arabic, and alum must all be pounded, separately, to a fine powder. You can get them pulverized . . . at the druggist's of whom you buy them. The logwood must be left in chips, for if powdered it will make the ink too thick. The cloves must be merely broken in half; they will prevent the ink from growing moldy. When all the ingredients are prepared, mix them well together in a large white-ware pitcher that will hold at least three pints, and pour on them a quart of boiling water (good measure). Stir the whole very hard with a stick, and set the pitcher in the sun or in a warm place. Lay a paper loosely over the top to keep out the dust, and place the stick so as to be always at hand. Stir it hard down to the bottom and all round the sides, several times every day for a week. On the eighth day do not stir it, but carefully pour off the liquid through a funnel into bottles. Do this without disturbing the ingredients at the bottom of the pitcher. Cork the bottles tightly. Then have ready a large half-pint of boiling water, and pour it on the contents of the pitcher so as to draw another infusion from the same ingredients (adding only a half ounce of fresh gum-arabic powdered), and stir it thoroughly. Proceed as before with this second drawing of ink, and in a week pour it off into a bottle. You may repeat this a third or even a fourth time, always adding another half-ounce of powdered gum-arabic, and a large half-pint of boiling water—also a few more cloves.

Ink made in this manner will be found excellent, flowing smoothly in the pen, and growing blacker after it has dried. Keeping it in the sun while infusing adds to its blackness; but it will be an excellent black if merely kept in a warm closet.[1]

[1]Miss Leslie, in *Godey's Magazine and Lady's Book*, January, 1849.

This recipe follows the chronological order, which, it may be repeated, is typical of such exposition. The required articles are listed at the beginning, where they may be referred to conveniently, which is also a common arrangement. This has the further advantage oftentimes of enabling a reader to tell quickly, without going far into the exposition, whether or not he has, or can obtain, the things required. In regard to specification, this explanation differs radically from that on bronze castings. No details of the process are omitted, every step is precisely indicated, nothing is left to inference or guess-work. Plainly, to do well in writing directions, one must know his process intimately, must take pains to set forth the little points which seem to him obvious but which may not be at all obvious to his reader, and must try for exactness in statement and phrasing.

Process exposition in narrative and descriptive settings. If they are clear and thorough, process expositions are never dry to those who want information. They are not always dry even to the ordinary reader, for they may be cast in narrative and descriptive forms that make them as interesting as most fiction. *Robinson Crusoe* is still read, and everyone knows how much space it gives to what Robinson made and how he made it. Several of Kipling's stories (*Captains Courageous* will do for an example) are full of sugar-coated exposition. *Two Years Before the Mast* holds its own with any romance of the sea ever written, and yet it gives an accurate and full account of many operations of seamanship. An extract from Dana's book will show, better than comment can do, that an explanation of the way in which something is done need not be dull:

> Just before sundown the mate ordered a boat's crew ashore, and I went as one of the number. We passed under the stern of the English brig, and had a long pull ashore. I shall never

forget the impression which our first landing on the beach of California made upon me. The sun had just gone down; it was getting dusky; the damp night-wind was beginning to blow, and the heavy swell of the Pacific was setting in, and breaking in loud and high "combers" upon the beach. We lay on our oars in the swell, just outside of the surf, waiting for a good chance to run in, when a boat, which had put off from the *Ayacucho*, came alongside of us, with a crew of dusky Sandwich-Islanders talking and hallooing in their outlandish tongue. They knew that we were novices in this kind of boating, and waited to see us go in. The second mate, however, who steered our boat, determined to have the advantage of their experience, and would not go in first. Finding, at length, how matters stood, they gave a shout, and taking advantage of a great comber which came swelling in, rearing its head, and lifting up the sterns of our boats nearly perpendicular, and again dropping them in the trough, they gave three or four long and strong pulls, and went in on the top of the great wave, throwing their oars overboard, and as far from the boat as they could throw them, and, jumping out the instant the boat touched the beach, they seized hold of her by the gunwale, on each side, and ran her up high and dry upon the sand. We saw at once how the thing was to be done, and also the necessity of keeping the boat stern out to the sea; for the instant the sea should strike upon her broadside or quarter, she would be driven up broadside on, and capsized. We pulled strongly in, and as soon as we felt that the sea had got hold of us, and was carrying us in with the speed of a racehorse, we threw the oars as far from the boat as we could, and took hold of the gunwales, ready to spring out and seize her when she struck, the officer using his utmost strength, with his steering oar, to keep her stern out. We were shot up upon the beach, and seizing the boat, ran her up high and dry, and picking up our oars, stood by her, ready for the captain to come down.

Finding that the captain did not come immediately, we put our oars in the boat, and leaving one to watch it, walked about the beach to see what we could of the place. The beach is nearly a mile in length between the two points, and of smooth sand. We had taken the only good landing-place, which is in the middle, it being more stony toward the ends. It is about twenty yards in width from high-water mark to a slight bank at which the soil

begins, and so hard that it is a favorite place for running horses. It was growing dark, so that we could just distinguish the dim outlines of the two vessels in the offing; and the great seas were rolling in in regular lines, growing larger and larger as they approached the shore, and hanging over the beach upon which they were to break, when their tops would curl over and turn white with foam, and, beginning at one extreme of the line, break rapidly to the other, as a child's long card-house falls when a card is knocked down at the end. The Sandwich-Islanders, in the meantime, had turned their boat round, and ran her down into the water, and were loading her with hides and tallow. As this was the work in which we were soon to be engaged, we looked on with some curiosity. They ran the boat so far into the water that every large sea might float her, and two of them, with their trousers rolled up, stood by the bows, one on each side, keeping her in her right position. This was hard work; for besides the force they had to use upon the boat, the large seas nearly took them off their legs. The others were running from the boat to the bank, upon which, out of the reach of the water, was a pile of dry bullocks' hides, doubled lengthwise in the middle, and nearly as stiff as boards. These they took upon their heads, one or two at a time, and carried down to the boat, in which one of their number stowed them away. They were obliged to carry them on their heads, to keep them out of the water, and we observed that they had on thick woolen caps. "Look here, Bill, and see what you're coming to!" said one of our men to another who stood by the boat. "Well, Dana," said the second mate to me, "this does not look much like Harvard College, does it? But it is what I call *'head work.'*" To tell the truth, it did not look very encouraging.

After they had got through with the hides, the Kanakas laid hold of the bags of tallow (the bags are made of hide, and are about the size of a common meal-bag), and lifted each upon the shoulders of two men, one at each end, who walked off with them to the boat, when all prepared to go aboard. Here, too, was something for us to learn. The man who steered shipped his oar and stood in the stern, and those that pulled the two after oars sat upon their benches, with their oars shipped, ready to strike out as soon as she was afloat. The two men remained standing at the bows; and when, at length, a large sea came in and floated her, seized hold of the gunwales, and ran out with her till they were

up to their armpits, and then tumbled over the gunwales into the bows dripping with water. The men at the oars struck out, but it wouldn't do; the sea swept back and left them nearly high and dry. The two fellows jumped out again; and the next time they succeeded better, and, with help of a deal of outlandish hallooing and bawling got her well off. We watched them till they were out of the breakers, and saw them steering for their vessel, which was now hidden in the darkness.

But here we are leaving plain exposition and are beginning to trespass on the domain of narration and description.

EXERCISES

1. Make a list of five subjects for process expositions that you could write on without preparation. Compare your list with other lists made by classmates.

2. Which of the following subjects could be so treated that the learner would need no other guidance than the process exposition itself?

(*a*) Shoeing a Horse
(*b*) Learning to Run an Aëroplane
(*c*) How to Make Molasses Candy
(*d*) Mending an Inner Tube
(*e*) The Care of a Rifle
(*f*) Putting up a Sailboat (or Motor-Boat) for the Winter
(*g*) Making a Permanent Mooring for the Pleasure Boat
(*h*) Making a Gloucester (or Cape Anne) Hammock
(*i*) How to Determine Specific Gravity
(*j*) Training an Elephant
(*k*) Cotton-Growing
(*l*) The Production of Gasoline
(*m*) The Manufacture of Dynamite
(*n*) Playing Checkers

3. Make as complete an outline as you can of some process with which you are familiar. Use the chronological order if possible.

4. Write an exposition on the basis of your outline. Your primary aims should be clearness and accuracy; your secondary aims, to be as readable and interesting as possible.

V. Exposition of Ideas

The aim of the exposition of ideas. In the exposition of ideas our aim is to make the reader understand the content of our thought about a particular subject. This type of exposition often makes use of descriptive and process expositions, but goes a step beyond them, comparing and classifying the objects described and trying to explain the why and wherefore of the steps in the process. It may deal, too, with principles and laws, with all sorts of general or abstract ideas, and with causes and effects. The following passage is a typical example:

We use the word *evolution* in many ways—to include many different kinds of changes. There is hardly any other scientific term used so carelessly—to imply so much, to mean so little.

We speak of the evolution of the stars, of the evolution of the horse, of the evolution of the steam engine, as though they were all part of the same process. What have they in common? Only this, that each concerns itself with the *history* of something. When the astronomer thinks of the *evolution* of the earth, the moon, the sun and the stars, he has a picture of diffuse matter that has slowly condensed. With condensation came heat; with heat, action and reaction within the mass until the chemical substances that we know today were produced. This is the nebular hypothesis of the astronomer. The astronomer explains, or tries to explain, how this evolution took place, by an appeal to the physical processes that have been worked out in the laboratory, processes which he thinks have existed through all the eons during which this evolution was going on and which were its immediate causes.

When the biologist thinks of the evolution of animals and plants, a different picture presents itself. He thinks of series of animals that have lived in the past, whose bones and shells have been preserved in the rocks. He thinks of these animals as having in the past given birth, through an unbroken succession of individuals, to the living inhabitants of the earth today. He thinks that the old, simpler types of the past have in part changed over into the more complex forms of today.[1]

[1] Thomas Hunt Morgan, *A Critique of the Theory of Evolution.*

Organization. Success in writing an exposition of an idea depends greatly on the intelligent organization of our material. Hence it would be well to make sure that we have fresh in mind the structural principles discussed in the preceding chapter. We must have a central idea and must keep it constantly in view as we write. We ought to give more than a merely perfunctory consideration to the choice of an audience and never should ignore the needs of that audience which we finally select. We should adopt an arrangement of material that fits our subject-matter and that will be clear and easy to follow. We should reënforce our arrangement of material with articulation wherever it will prove helpful. And we should so proportion the units of our treatment that matters which need fullest explanation will receive adequate treatment. The accomplishment of these things requires foresight, intelligent planning.

Planning the exposition. Having chosen a subject, our first step in planning should be the formulation of a proposition or thesis which we are to expound. A vague general notion drifting about in our minds, or even a phrase written down, will not do. For the sake of definiteness in our planning and writing and for clearness in the final result, we should frame a proposition (a simple declarative sentence) which expresses the central thought of our exposition. Our subject, let us say, is the work of Edgar Allan Poe. There are many points of view to adopt toward such a subject and many different things to be said about it. Now of all the ideas that occur to us as we think about Poe's writings, which are the outstanding ones?—the ones that we should most like to discuss, or feel best qualified to write about? We have, perhaps, for the first time been reading some of Poe's journalistic articles and have been somewhat disappointed with much of what we have read; we have by no means felt the full power of the author of tales that held us

enthralled and poems that haunted our memories. Here, then, is our thesis—not brilliant and original, but at least definite and workable: "Poe's real greatness lay in his imaginative work—his tales and his poems." To give this idea body and detail so that it will be fully understood by our readers is, then, the mark we shall aim at in writing our exposition.

We are now ready to prepare an outline. One method of doing this is to jot down all the ideas on the subject that we can think of, not stopping to bother much about the order in which these notes are arranged. Then, by carefully going over our notes we gather together the various jottings into related groups, and find for each group a heading sufficiently comprehensive to include all the separate items. Another method—and the one we shall follow here—is to try to see our subject in its larger aspects before considering any of its details. In the light of our thesis, Poe's work almost inevitably will divide itself into two parts—the imaginative and the non-imaginative. We may take these as the main divisions of our essay. Which should come first? As far as simple clearness is concerned, it would seem that either one might come first. But there is another consideration that will help us to determine this preliminary and important matter of arrangement. What is the final impression we wish to leave with our readers?—an impression of his weakness as a writer or an impression of his strength? Again, in the light of our thesis, we shall probably decide that the stronger order will be to work upward from indifference to admiration. Our treatment of the non-imaginative work will be rather negative in tone; if, therefore, we handle that part of it first and clear the way for the positive portion, we shall better enforce our main idea.

Before we write down these main divisions we must decide whether our outline shall consist of topics or state-

ments. If we are practiced writers and can keep track of our leading ideas even in the midst of a crowd of details, we may prefer the topical form. It is certainly easier to prepare. But until we are pretty sure of ourselves we shall probably find it safer to make each heading and subheading a definite statement. Thus we guard against forgetfulness or confusion later on, and against setting down topics before we have really made up our minds what we intend to say about them. A comparison of the two will show the greater definiteness of the statement outline:

I. Journalistic work	I. The journalistic work is of little permanent value.
II. Tales and poems	II. The tales and poems are a distinct addition to the world's literature.

For the first exposition of an idea that we write in college it will be wiser to choose the statement outline.

We then put each of our main headings at the top of a sheet of paper in order to leave room for expansion and thus avoid the manual labor of rewriting as the outline grows. Each heading now presents a problem of division not greatly different from the one with which we began. The journalistic work, we find, is of two types: (1) criticism and (2) so-called scientific or philosophical articles. These will form the two main subheads under I. We phrase them according to our knowledge and opinions. The result may be something like this:

I. The journalistic work is of little permanent value.

A. The criticisms, in spite of Poe's acumen and sensibility, are often marred by unfairness and prejudice.

B. The so-called scientific or philosophical articles are practically worthless.

Whether or not we subdivide A and B will depend on how fully we mean to treat point I. In view of our main point it is the part to which we should give least space; consequently, if our essay as a whole is not to be much over a thousand words, this part of the outline is perhaps adequate without further additions. If so, we then turn to point II. Here the division is ready made—tales and poems. As a discussion of the tales will probably prepare the way for a discussion of the poems, we begin with the tales. What had we in mind when we used the word "addition" in phrasing point II? One idea, certainly, was that the tales were original; another idea, probably, was that the tales were not merely novel, but powerful and effective also. The combined ideas of originality and excellence will give us a suitable heading under which to group all that we have to say about the tales:

II. The tales and poems are a distinct addition to the world's literature.

A. The tales are original in kind and of great literary excellence.

As this is to be an important part of our paper, treated in greater detail than point I, we must subdivide A. The result of our reflections concerning the tales might prove to be as follows:

A. The tales are original in kind and of great literary excellence.

1. In writing his analytical tales Poe invented
   (*a*) The detective story;
   (*b*) The story with a pseudo-scientific background.
2. In his allegorical tales he achieves effects of extraordinary imaginative reality.
3. In his tales of the supernatural, which are unique, his genius found its highest expression in prose.

Points 1, 2, and 3 might themselves be subdivided. But this illustration has been carried out far enough to give us, in all probability, an idea of what we should do in planning an exposition of an idea. Before leaving it, however, let us put together what we have already done:

Subject: The Work of Edgar Allan Poe.

Central Idea: Poe's real genius lay in his imaginative work—his tales and his poems.

I. The journalistic work is of little permanent value.

  A. The criticisms, in spite of Poe's acumen and sensibility, are often marred by unfairness and prejudice.

  B. The so-called scientific or philosophical articles are practically worthless.

II. The tales and poems are a distinct addition to the world's literature.

  A. The tales are original in kind and of great literary excellence.

    1. In writing his analytical tales Poe invented

      (*a*) The detective story;
      (*b*) The story with a pseudo-scientific background.

    2. In his allegorical tales he achieves effects of extraordinary imaginative reality.

    3. In his tales of the supernatural, which are unique, his genius found its highest expression in prose.

  B. The poems (analysis not undertaken).[1]

With an outline of this sort before us as we write we should be able to produce an orderly and clear exposition which attains the goal we set for it.

[1]This outline is based on a portion of an essay on Poe by Alphonso G. Newcomer, reprinted in the Appendix (page 607).

Giving Body to the Exposition

The importance of amplification. General ideas are most readily grasped when they are applied to concrete instances. The quotation below, from an essay, *On Responsibility*, by President Hibben, will show the force of this truth:

> There is, of course, such a thing as a serial responsibility, as I would style it, that is, where a number of persons in turn assume the responsibility for a certain task, each contributing his share to its accomplishment, and then pass on the full responsibility to some other. This is illustrated in the sending of a registered package. Each one in the series does his part in the process of forwarding it, and receives a signed acknowledgement that another has relieved him of his particular duty and of all responsibility connected with it.

The statement in the first sentence is clear, as general statements go, but it gains noticeably in clearness because of the concrete application given it in the second and third sentences. As a rule an abstraction remains comparatively dim until it is illustrated. A rough analogy with one of our great coast lights is suggested: the lamp itself is comparatively dim, but placed in a system of lenses and reflectors it flashes light out to sea a distance of nineteen miles or more.

The expository writer's way to success usually lies through the specific. Other things—such as grasp of subject and use of language—being equal, he will make his work tell best who uses most freely and skillfully examples and illustrations, who unfolds a generalization by showing its specific content, who enforces important points by iteration, who presents a knotty or difficult abstraction from more than one point of view. Such amplification not only provides an abundance of concrete material for the mind to work upon, but it allows a reader time in which to shape his ideas as he goes along. An exposition may be clear for

those who grasp abstractions quickly and easily and yet be so condensed that it makes little impression upon ordinary readers because it draws their attention away from one part of the subject before they have had sufficient time to comprehend it, before they are ready to take up some other part. To be brief, invigorating, stimulating—that is admirable. But one can also be too brief. To take one's reader at a gallop across rough country is exhilarating for him if he is a good rider, but if he is not, one may leave him in the first ditch or sprawling by the wayside. For most readers there must be amplitude of exposition sufficient to allow ideas time in which to sink in, to become assimilated. Hence the value of using, on occasion, more than one illustration of a point, of attacking an idea from more than one direction, of restating a principle, of gradually unfolding the meaning of a generalization.

Unfolding the content of a general statement. The following paragraph illustrates a typical mode of amplification:

> Perhaps the most striking instances of adaptation to varying conditions determined purely by congenital endowment, independent of prior experience, are to be found in the behavior of ants. All the activities characteristic of ants, as well as of bees and wasps, are in their main outlines instinctive. They are displayed by ants which have been taken from their nests immediately after being hatched, and set apart to form a new nest. Independently of prior experience, the processes of nest-building, the rearing of the young, the capture of the so-called slaves, the maintenance of domestic animals, and the like, vary in adaptation to varying circumstances. The mode of building the nest varies with the situation and accessible material. Change in the weather causes them to make corresponding changes in their nest. When the nest is too damp, they pierce holes in it so that it looks like a sponge. This facilitates evaporation and keeps their home drier. In the tending of their young they show a similar plasticity. The youngest larvae are generally kept in the deepest chambers of the

nest; the half-grown in those above, and the full-grown, together with the pupae, in the highest. When the weather is cold and rainy, they carry the more mature larvae from the higher into the lower chambers.[1]

The first sentence states a proposition in general terms. The second helps to elucidate the phrase "adaptation . . . determined purely by congenital endowment" by substituting for it the common word "instinctive." The third sentence, which states in effect that the ants observed could not have imitated other ants or have learned by experience, still further elucidates the phrase. The fourth sentence restates the proposition and defines "behavior" by specifying "the processes of nest-building, the rearing of the young," and so on. The next four sentences do for the phrase "the processes of nest-building" just what that phrase and its neighbors do for the term "behavior." The remaining sentences apply the same process to the phrase "the rearing of the young." The writer might have continued to amplify his treatment of the proposition by expounding the statement that "the mode of building the nest varies with the situation and accessible material"; for while this statement is more specific than "behavior," it is nevertheless capable of being more fully developed—it might serve, for example, as the subject of an entire chapter in a book devoted to ants. The same holds true, of course, for the other statements of a similar kind. But the writer has made his point sufficiently clear for his purpose; he is not writing about ants, only using them by way of illustration.

Briefly stated, the mode of amplification we have just examined consists in putting the less general in place of the more general. Thus for "behavior" is substituted "the processes of nest-building," and so forth; for the latter is

[1] G. F. Stout, *A Manual of Psychology*, pp. 234-235.

substituted "the mode of building the nest varies with the situation and accessible material," and so on. It is a process of unfolding.

Example and illustration. Let us examine another piece of expository writing, an extract from Huxley's *Six Lectures to Workingmen*. The lecturer is explaining what is meant by inductive and deductive reasoning, which he has stated to be the modes of thought used in scientific work:

Probably there is not one here who has not in the course of the day had occasion to set in motion a complex train of reasoning, of the very same kind, though different in degree, as that which a scientific man goes through in tracing the causes of natural phenomena.

A very trivial circumstance will serve to exemplify this. Suppose you go into a fruiterer's shop, wanting an apple—you take one up, and, on biting it, you find it is sour; you look at it, and see that it is hard and green. You take up another one, and that too is hard, green, and sour. The shopman offers you a third; but before biting it, you examine it, and find that it is hard and green, and you immediately say that you will not have it, as it must be sour, like those that you have already tried.

Nothing can be more simple than that, you think; but if you will take the trouble to analyze and trace out into its logical elements what has been done by the mind, you will be greatly surprised. In the first place, you have performed the operation of induction. You found that, in two experiences, hardness and greenness in apples went together with sourness. It was so in the first case, and it was confirmed by the second. True, it is a very small basis, but still it is enough to make an induction from; you generalize the facts, and you expect to find sourness in apples where you get hardness and greenness. You found upon that a general law, that all hard and green apples are sour; and that, so far as it goes, is a perfect induction. Well, having got your natural law in this way, when you are offered another apple which you find is hard and green, you say, "All hard and green apples are sour; this apple is hard and green, therefore this apple is sour." That train of reasoning is what logicians call a syllogism, and has all its various parts and terms—its major premise, its minor premise,

and its conclusion. And, by the help of further reasoning, which, if drawn out, would have to be exhibited in two or three other syllogisms, you arrive at your final determination, "I will not have that apple." So that, you see, you have, in the first place, established a law by induction and upon that you have founded a deduction, and reasoned out the special conclusion of the particular case. Well now, suppose, having got your law, that at some time afterwards you are discussing the qualities of apples with a friend. You will say to him, "It is a very curious thing—but I find that all hard and green apples are sour!" Your friend says to you, "But how do you know that?" You at once reply, "Oh, because I have tried them over and over again, and have always found them to be so." Well, if we were talking science instead of common sense, we should call that an experimental verification. And, if still opposed, you go further, and say, "I have heard from the people in Somersetshire and Devonshire, where a large number of apples are grown, that they have observed the same thing. It is also found to be the case in Normandy, and in North America. In short, I find it to be the universal experience of mankind wherever attention has been directed to the subject." Whereupon, your friend, unless he is a very unreasonable man, agrees with you, and is convinced that you are quite right in the conclusion you have drawn. He believes, although perhaps he does not know he believes it, that the more extensive verifications are, that the more frequently experiments have been made, and the results of the same kind arrived at—that the more varied the conditions under which the same results are attained, the more certain is the ultimate conclusion, and he disputes the question no further. He sees that the experiment has been tried under all sorts of conditions, as to time, place, and people, with the same result; and he says with you, therefore, that the law you have laid down must be a good one, and he must believe it.

In science we do the same thing; the philosopher exercises precisely the same faculties, though in a much more delicate manner. In scientific inquiry it becomes a matter of duty to expose a supposed law to every possible kind of verification, and to take care, moreover, that this is done intentionally, and not left to a mere accident, as in the case of the apples. And in science, as in common life, our confidence in a law is in exact proportion to the absence of variation in the result of our experimental verifications. For instance, if you let go your grasp of an article you may have

in your hand, it will immediately fall to the ground. That is a very common verification of one of the best established laws of nature—that of gravitation. The method by which men of science establish the existence of that law is exactly the same as that by which we have established the trivial proposition about the sourness of hard and green apples. But we believe it in such an extensive, thorough, and unhesitating manner because the universal experience of mankind verifies it, and we can verify it ourselves at any time; and that is the strongest possible foundation on which any natural law can rest.

This is lucid exposition, and is far from being repellingly formal or dry, though it puts into operation some of the processes of definition that we have noted. Like the preceding illustration, it shows that our understanding of a generalization grows as its application becomes more concrete.

If we have never thought about the matter before, Huxley's opening statement can win from us nothing better than a vague assent, due perhaps to our faith in him as an authority in such matters. It is his business to alter that vague assent into a positive conviction of the truth of his proposition, founded upon an understanding of what the proposition actually means. In the first place, he gives an example of a piece of everyday reasoning. He then proceeds to take this reasoning to pieces and to show that one part is induction, the other deduction. What he has done, technically speaking, has been to define the terms "induction" and "deduction" by example. By a continuation of his example he defines in the same manner the term "experimental verification," and shows that the more completely an induction is verified the more faith we put in it. Lastly, by comparing the "law" of hard, green apples to the law of gravitation, he shows that the reasoning processes involved in each are the same in kind. His separation of reasoning into "inductive" and "deductive," is an instance of division.

The value of illustration appears in this paragraph from Emerson's *Transcendentalist,* which we shall divide into two parts, looking first at the opening two sentences only:

> The materialist, secure in the certainty of sensation, mocks at fine-spun theories, at star-gazers and dreamers, and believes that his life is solid, that he at least takes nothing for granted, but knows where he stands, and what he does. Yet how easy it is to show him that he also is a phantom walking and working amid phantoms, and that he need only ask a question or two beyond his daily questions to find his solid universe growing dim and impalpable before his sense.

In these sentences the thought of the paragraph is expressed, but not altogether to our satisfaction. The statement that the materialist "need only ask a question or two beyond his daily question to find his solid universe growing dim and impalpable before his sense" leaves but a vague impression on our minds unless we happen to be used to metaphysical thinking. The statement cries aloud for concrete embodiment, and Emerson heeds that cry throughout the remainder of the paragraph:

> The sturdy capitalist, no matter how deep and square on blocks of Quincy granite he lays the foundations of his banking-house or Exchange, must set it, at last, not on a cube corresponding to the angles of his structure, but on a mass of unknown materials and solidity, red-hot or white-hot perhaps at the core, which rounds off to an almost perfect sphericity, and lies floating in soft air, and goes spinning away, dragging bank and banker with it at a rate of thousands of miles the hour, he knows not whither—a bit of bullet, now glimmering, now darkling through a small cubic space on the edge of an unimaginable pit of emptiness. And this wild balloon, in which his whole venture is embarked, is a just symbol of his whole state and faculty. One thing at least, he says, is certain, and does not give me the headache, that figures do not lie; the multiplication table has been hitherto found unimpeachable truth; and, moreover, if I put a gold eagle in my safe, I find it again tomorrow—but for these thoughts, I know not whence they

are. They change and pass away. But ask him why he believes that a uniform experience will continue uniform, or on what grounds he founds his faith in figures, and he will perceive that his mental fabric is built up on just as strange and quaking foundations as his proud edifice of stone.

Emerson's purpose in providing these admirable illustrations was, evidently, not to add to the meaning of the opening sentences of the paragraph, but rather to draw that meaning forth, give it intensity, and drive it home. What before was abstract and difficult to understand has become through illustration concrete and more comprehensible.

Generalized description and narration. Description and narration oftentimes play important parts in giving body to exposition. Because exposition deals with what is typical, with what is true of any member of a class, description and narration become generalized in its service. The meaning of this will be made clear by the following description of Mohammedan funeral customs:

As soon as a man dies, the women begin to lament loudly, and often professional wailing women are sent for to beat their tambourines and utter cries of grief; the relatives join them in their cries, and with disheveled hair beat their faces and rend their garments. If a man dies in the morning he is buried before night, but if he dies in the afternoon or later he is not buried until the next day. The body is carefully washed and sprinkled with rose water, etc., the eyes are closed, the jaw is bound up, the ankles are tied together, the hands are placed on the breast, and the ears and nostrils are stopped with cotton. The style and quality of the cere-clothes vary with the position and means of the deceased; when dressed, the body is laid upon a bier and covered with a Kashmir shawl. The funeral procession is composed of six poor men, mostly blind, who walk slowly and chant, "There is no god but God, and Mohammed is the Apostle of God. God bless and save him!" Next come the male friends and relatives of the deceased; then two or more dervishes, with the flags of the sect to which they belong; then three or four school-boys, one of whom carries upon a palm-stick desk a copy of the Koran covered with

a cloth, singing a poem on the events of the Last Day, the Judgment, etc. Next comes the bier, borne head-foremost, and then the female mourners; the bier is carried by friends in relays of four into a mosque, and is set down in the place of prayer, with the right side toward Mecca; both men and women from the procession enter the mosque, and prayers are then said ascribing majesty to God, and beseeching mercy for the dead. . . .[1]

This is typical; the characteristics described are not those of a particular funeral but of Mohammedan funerals in general. The description has become generalized.

Narration is adapted to expository uses in the same manner. The account given by John Galsworthy in *The Freelands* of an average day of an average aristocratic English landowner will serve as an example:

Your Malloring is called with a cup of tea, at, say, seven o'clock, out of a nice, clean, warm bed; he gets into a bath that has been got ready for him; into clothes and boots that have been brushed for him; and goes down to a room where there's a fire burning already if it's a cold morning, writes a few letters, perhaps, before eating a breakfast of exactly what he likes, nicely prepared for him, and reading the newspaper that best comforts his soul; when he has eaten and read, he lights his cigar or his pipe . . . then in his study he sits down to steady direction of other people, either by interview or by writing letters, or what not. In this way, between directing people and eating what he likes, he passes the whole day, except that for two or three hours, sometimes, indeed, seven or eight hours, he attends to his physique by riding, motoring, playing a game, or indulging in a sport that he has chosen for himself. And, at the end of all that, he probably has another bath that has been made ready for him, puts on clean clothes that have been put out for him, goes down to a good dinner that has been cooked for him, smokes, reads, learns, and inwardly digests, or else plays cards, billiards, and acts as host till he is sleepy, and so to bed, in a clean, warm bed, in a clean, fresh room.

This is vivid and has much of the interest which attaches to accounts of individuals in stories, yet it is expository in

[1]E. A. Wallis Budge, *The Nile.*

character because it deals with what is typical. "Your Malloring" is not just one person by the name of Malloring, but is any normal specimen of Malloring's class.

In Conclusion

Stress has been laid upon amplification because in composition courses a great many students fail to appreciate its value. They are much more likely to hand in to their instructor a sensible and methodical outline of a subject than they are to hand in a complete exposition of it. The neglect to provide a sufficiency of apt and clarifying illustrations is probably due largely to the writer's failure to put himself in the reader's place. He himself understands what he has written and takes it for granted that others will; consciously or unconsciously he illustrates for himself his own general statements, which, as Huxley has shown us in his remarks on inductive reasoning, he has reached through specific instances; but he overlooks the fact that in these respects he has a great advantage over his reader. When the undergraduate writer himself asks for an explanation he wants it to be specific, he wants it to give him illustrations that will help him to understand. Well, turn about is fair play.

Like anything else, amplification may be carried too far. It is not an end in itself, but a means to clearness. When clearness has been attained, further amplification is unnecessary. It may then become mere padding. The difficulty is to gauge one's audience correctly, to judge rightly whether a statement will be clear to them or will need restatement or other explanation. This is the fine art of exposition. Few succeed in it perfectly, for it is not easy, as any teacher will aver who has tried lecturing to a class so that its slower-witted members might follow and understand and its

quicker-witted members might not find long stretches for naps or day-dreams. Yet anyone who does at all well in exposition must in some degree understand the requirements of his audience. By taking note of the comments made by the instructor on expository themes, by trying to discover just why it is that some of the expositions he reads are clear to him and others are not, by getting acquainted with essays by such masters of explanation as Arnold, Huxley, Tyndall, Macaulay, Bryce, and John Fiske, and by trying to grasp, occasionally, some point of view other than his own, the student will make sure progress in the art of being lucid.

EXERCISES

1. Complete the outline of Poe's work by means of the essay to be found on page 607 of the Appendix.

2. Choose one of the subjects listed below. Analyze it carefully, and make up your mind what your main idea will be. Select your audience. Unless otherwise instructed, plan to write a paper of about eight hundred words. Pick out the main headings and arrange them, as far as possible, so that the easier parts come first. Do the same with the subheadings. Determine what points should be given most space, and note these on the outline. If your instructor desires it, submit your outline for his criticism. Write out your exposition with an eye to making it as clear as you can. Have you left out anything of importance? Have you failed to use an illustration where it would make some hard statement clear? The resulting paper may be somewhat bare and mechanical. Read it over and see if you can cover up the skeleton of your essay without sacrificing clearness or wasting words.

(*a*) Theodore Roosevelt, Preacher and Exponent of Americanism
(*b*) The Character of Grover Cleveland
(*c*) Lincoln's Understanding of the Plain People
(*d*) Washington as a General

(*e*) The Making of the Treaty of Versailles
(*f*) Pan-Americanism
(*g*) Present Conditions in Mexico
(*h*) The Organization of the United States Army
(*i*) The Origin of the Progressive Party (or any political party. In any case, an impartial statement of facts)
(*j*) The Operation of the Panama Canal
(*k*) The Inter-State Commerce Commission
(*l*) The United States Weather Bureau
(*m*) The Presidential Campaign of 1920 (or 1924)
(*n*) The Business of a Stock-Broker
(*o*) The Character of John Milton
(*p*) A Comparison of Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* and Dryden's *All for Love*
(*q*) A Modern Play
(*r*) A Volume of Essays
(*s*) A Recent Novel
(*t*) Characteristics of ———'s Poetry (or Prose)
(*u*) The Tides
(*v*) The Variations of the Compass
(*w*) A New Discovery in Science
(*x*) The Phenomena of Thunder-Storms
(*y*) A Distinguished Piece of Engineering
(*z*) A New Development in Surgery

3. Bring into class for discussion an example of amplification taken from some expository book or magazine article.

4. Prepare yourself to give an oral amplification of one of the following statements:

(*a*) Some animals live in a state of almost constant fear.
(*b*) We judge a man partly by the company he keeps.
(*c*) "The world is too much with us."
(*d*) "We must be free or die, who speak the tongue that Shakespeare spake."
(*e*) "The future is only the past again, entered through another gate."
(*f*) "A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush."
(*g*) "A singed cat fears the fire."
(*h*) "Tell a lie to find the truth."
(*i*) Truth can be stranger than fiction.

5. Point out the illustrations used in "Corporations and the Nation," page 604.

6. Which of the subjects mentioned in Exercise 2 could be effectively handled by means of generalized narration and description?

7. Give in a paragraph your idea of one of the following terms (the quotation of a brief definition taken from a dictionary makes a useful beginning):

(*a*) Amateur athlete
(*b*) Good fellowship
(*c*) Protective tariff
(*d*) A gentleman
(*e*) College spirit
(*f*) Tact
(*g*) Socialism
(*h*) The Renaissance
(*i*) Labor union
(*j*) Capitalism
(*k*) The honor system
(*l*) Student government
(*m*) A snob
(*n*) A self-made man
(*o*) Melodrama
(*p*) Militarism

8. Gather information on at least five of the foregoing topics so that you will be prepared to discuss and criticize the work of some of your classmates when it is read in class.

9. If time remains for further practice in exposition, interesting short papers may be written pointing out essential differences between:

(*a*) The best newspaper in your state and a poor one.
(*b*) *Harper's Magazine* and the *Atlantic Monthly*.
(*c*) Democracy in France and democracy in the United States.
(*d*) A well-governed city and an ill-governed city.
(*e*) A story, novel, or play as the author wrote it and as it is presented in the moving-pictures.
(*f*) A good sermon and a poor one.
(*g*) An interesting lecture and a dull one.
(*h*) One's view of the country as he walks through it and as he rides through it in a train or automobile.
(*i*) A liberal education and a technical education.

CHAPTER IV

ARGUMENT

I. The Nature of Argument

Argument distinguished from exposition. Argument is that type of writing in which the intention is to convince or persuade. Its fundamental processes are definition and division; and in form it is sometimes difficult or impossible to distinguish from exposition. An essay on Alexander Hamilton, written by a Republican, might seem expository to Republicans and argumentative to Democrats, and *vice versa*. An explanation of the methods of fire-prevention used in typical German and American cities would be expository in form, but it would be argumentative in effect if its main result were to lead the reader to believe that the greater loss of life and property in America due to lax building codes should be checked. But for the practical purposes of this discussion there need be no serious confusion, because argument, as we shall use the term, is concerned only with matters about which there is an evident and unmistakable difference of opinion, so handled that it is plain that the writer does not merely wish us to know what his opinion is, but wishes us to adopt it or act upon it. The demonstration of a proposition in geometry represents the perfection of argumentative form, yet it does not come within the scope of argument as we have limited the term. Reasonable men must agree that "in an equilateral triangle the angles are equal"; there is no escape from the logic of the demonstration and, consequently, no room for argument. But the discussion of such

questions as "Should freshmen be allowed to play on varsity teams?" or "Has the United States been benefited by women's suffrage?" or "Should the railroads of the United States be owned and operated by the Federal Government?" are properly argumentative because they may be answered in more than one way.

What is convincing argument? At the outset a fundamental and interesting question arises: What is convincing or persuasive argument? Theoretically, a convincing argument would consist of sound reasoning based upon the essential facts of the question at issue and so presented that it leads the reader or listener to agree with the opinion advocated. Practically, a convincing argument may be much less. In judging the convincingness of any given argument, two highly variable factors need to be taken into consideration: the mental habits and equipment of the person who is to be convinced; and the degree of importance which he attaches to the disputed question.

An argument may be convincing to one man and quite the reverse to another. The argument which convinces the jury does not always convince the judge; the argument which convinces a Republican does not always convince a Democrat or a Socialist; the argument which convinces the theologian does not always convince the scientist. Some men give great weight to custom and precedent and habitually look askance at "new-fangled notions." An appeal to the authority of the past, to the wisdom of what their forefathers did and what they themselves have always done, will carry more conviction to them than to those who regard custom as a galling yoke and the ways of their forefathers as "out of date." A man may be conservative in some respects and radical in others: he may resist new ideas when they apply to business, or politics, or social relations,

and be receptive to them when they apply to science, mechanics, or art. Furthermore, he may be accustomed to weighing evidence, to distinguishing between established facts and assertions, to testing generalizations with some thoroughness; or he may be impatient of these processes (or ignorant of them) and eager to jump quickly to a conclusion. Arguments have been known to be convincing, temporarily at least, which were little more than judicious compounds of humor, flattery of the audience, ridicule of an opponent, glowing tributes to dead statesmen, and sentimental appeals to patriotism.

The other factor, the degree of importance attached by readers or listeners to the subject of an argument, is equally variable. In many cases a man's attitude toward an argument varies with the effect that his decision may have on his own fortunes. If a question concerns him but slightly or not at all, he may oftentimes be led more easily to accept the writer's opinion than if the question concerns him deeply. That is, a comparatively superficial argument might convince him in the one case, whereas a weightier argument would be required in the other. He might, for instance, be more easily convinced by an argument attempting to show that a certain public improvement was necessary if the improvement would cost him nothing than if a share of the expense would fall on him. Speaking generally, and remembering that important decisions may be made intuitively or impulsively, a man will weigh the pros and cons of an argument most carefully when expense, trouble, ridicule, loss of social position, or some other sacrifice may wait upon his decision.

The practical effectiveness of an argument, then, cannot be determined without regard to these variable factors. On theoretical grounds we might say that the following editorial is not a convincing argument; on practical grounds

we should have to modify our judgment by saying that it might be convincing to certain persons under certain circumstances:

"Movie" Manners and Morals

Almost invariably in amusements designed to meet the popular taste the producers aim below the mark. The taste of the normal human being, however uneducated and undeveloped, is better than those who are so eager to please it believe. One is disappointed to find that often the crudest and most vulgar entertainment produces the greatest applause, but that applause does not necessarily proclaim popular taste. Thus, at the "movies" one hears constant expressions of boredom from even the most unsophisticated people, and constant objections, more or less articulate, to the glaring improbabilities of situation or characterization.

The influential potentialities of the moving picture cannot be too seriously considered. Undeveloped people, people in transition stages, and children are deeply affected by them. One child who was a frequent attendant at moving-picture exhibitions, when taken to the circus, was bored by the exquisite skill of the lassoing feats and the fast riding of the cowboys' ponies. Inured to the sight of horses on the screen running at the rate of a high-power motor, the natural motion of even a superhorse must seem a contemptible thing to the child's imagination.

Another disintegrating effect of the sensational moving picture is its influence upon the child's sense of humor. Watch a Saturday afternoon audience of children laughing immoderately at automobiles going over a precipice and other death-breeding disasters as if they were the height of humor. Any serious-minded person must be concerned at the spectacle. And it is appalling to contemplate the incredible "movie" English that the child, in whose home English may be a foreign tongue, is imbibing! Such sentences as were surely never met before in anything but an explanatory leaflet printed in English by one who knows it not. A very large number—perhaps the majority of men in the moving-picture business—are men not born to our language; but nothing could be simpler than the employment of someone versed in grammar and syntax to write the explanatory paragraphs. "Jim extols his brother not to" perform some deed is one caption.

"Wear this for a sentiment of me," is another. There is no end to the strange lingual misapprehensions.

To the normal grown-up mind the constant exaggeration of gesture, facial expression, action, and situation brings its own antidote of boredom, for beyond a certain point exaggeration cannot create the effect desired. On the other hand, with the vivid pliant mind of the child the reaction is not the same. That the resulting effect is undesirable cannot be doubted for a moment. A picture of life in which the heroine spins around like a top in lieu of walking, in which the wealthy host shows his desire to have a guest leave by throwing him downstairs, in which everybody handles everybody with violence, in which facial expression resembles the squeezing of a rubber doll's face rather than any normal action of the human features, must give to the young mind an angle upon life hopelessly distorted.

Neither does it seem desirable for the child to learn through moving pictures the changed and sometimes viciously altered versions of the classics and history that they frequently present. Whether it is an exaggerated written-into, and therefore weakened, paraphrase of an opera story, or whether it is a presentation of a historical event, the effect upon the young mind is too often an assimilation of facts that are not facts and the acceptance of adulterated versions of literature. When there is historical inaccuracy, the case is even more lamentable.

But it is the psychology—or rather total absence of it—in the average moving-picture play that constitutes its greatest danger to the growing mind. Especially is this injurious to the more or less rudderless being whom we must educate into a good citizen, the child of alien parents who too often is contemptuous of the habits and maxims of his parents and ignorant of anything American but the hybrid pavement life of a polyglot city. The version of life presented to him in the majority of moving pictures is false in fact, sickly in sentiment, and utterly foreign to the Anglo-Saxon ideals of our Nation. In them we usually find this formula for a hero: He must commit a crime, repent of it, and be exonerated on the ground that he "never had a mother" or "never had a chance" —or perhaps because he was born poor. The heroine is in most cases the familiar passive, persecuted heroine of melodrama.

There are laudable exceptions—films that are truly educational or of news value, honestly romantic or well acted; but taking the

"movies" as they are today the story of the average screen drama plays upon the weakest, most illogical prejudices and sentimentalities of the less thinking classes far more than the old-fashioned melodrama.

This editorial is typical of a large number of informal, everyday arguments. It does not handle its points thoroughly enough to satisfy the theoretical requirements of argument—the conditions under which most editorials are written and the demands of a majority of readers would preclude doing so unless the question were very simple and the essential facts few—but it is interesting and suggestive and may carry conviction. A person of cultivated tastes who had recently seen a poor moving-picture show might believe every word in it. Most of us form opinions and make decisions on no broader basis of evidence than that given in this editorial. To do so may be unscientific, but it is very human. Besides, there are questions that in the practical course of affairs have to be decided upon scanty evidence. Many young men, for example, have to choose occupations before they know their best abilities. Questions of national policy often must be decided without a knowledge of all the relevant facts and with little assurance that unforeseen causes may not modify or destroy intended or hoped-for results.

The type of argument to be studied in this chapter. It might be profitable for us to study argumentation in all its varied phases ranging from a patent-medicine advertisement to a plea before the Supreme Court in a case of first-rate importance, but that would be impossible in a textbook dealing with the general subject of composition. We shall accordingly limit ourselves to one point of view—that of an educated man or woman who wishes to address other educated men or women on questions in which they may

take a serious interest. We shall try to steer a middle course between the formless and rambling disputes which have no clear-cut proposition for their basis and the formal and elaborate arguments of the professional debater, scientist, or lawyer. In doing so we should not lose sight of the fact that there are other types of argument, some more superficial, some more rigorous.

EXERCISES

1. Mention two or three subjects that might be treated either from an expository or an argumentative point of view.

2. Find a brief argument that seems convincing to you. State the question which is discussed and explain to the class why you find the argument convincing. (Material may be found in newspaper editorials and in journals like *The Outlook*, *The Independent*, *The New Republic*, and *The Nation*.)

3. Mention two or three specific questions of a practical kind that are usually decided on a pretty scanty basis of argument.

4. What kinds of question are you disposed to settle in accordance with your prejudices rather than in accordance with careful reasoning?

5. In what important respects are you conservative? In what important respects are you radical?

II. Analysis of the Question

When Daniel O'Connell remarked that an orator should always know what he is aiming at because the man who aims at nothing is apt to hit it, he gave a valuable hint to those who wish to argue successfully. There can be no sound argument until one sees clearly just what it is that one is arguing about and knows the main points in dispute. To perceive the goal and the steps by which it must be reached is a condition of effectiveness. The best means of

attaining such a perception, of clarifying one's ideas about an argumentative subject and helping one to deal with it definitely and purposefully, is an analysis of the question.

It often happens that much of what the writer learns from this analysis will not ultimately go into his finished argument. The purpose of the analysis is not to furnish material, but to give the writer a good grasp of his subject. Even if a careful analysis did not supply half a dozen sentences in the written argument, it would still be well worth while. Upon it, to a very considerable extent, would depend the planning and shaping of the argument; and it would help to insure the writer against overlooking important points or wasting his time on unessential ones.

The proposition. An argument is designed to prove something. A statement of this something to be proved made in a single declarative sentence of affirmation or denial is known as a proposition. As everything included in an argument ought to help, directly or indirectly, in winning assent to the proposition, it is obvious that the framing of the proposition should be the first step in analysis. In doing this work we should try to accomplish two things. First, we should endeavor to phrase the proposition so that it expresses as exactly as possible the opinion, doctrine, project, or whatever else it may be that we wish a reader or listener to give his assent to. The proposition ought to state just what we mean, neither more nor less. If it fails to do this, it is not a trustworthy guide to follow in the selection of material, and is generally misleading both to writer and to reader. Suppose, for example, that we wish to urge the view that the United States should join the League of Nations. Such propositions as "The United States ought to take an active part in all world affairs" and "The United States ought to favor the League

of Nations" would be unsatisfactory, for neither one would say just what we meant: the first one would require us to cover more ground than we really need to cover; the second one would allow us to cover less than is essential. Or suppose we wish to convince a certain manufacturer that he ought to equip his factory with the X automatic sprinkler, which we are selling. Of the following propositions, which one most nearly expresses our meaning? "Automatic sprinklers afford protection against loss by fire"; "X automatic sprinklers have advantages over other types"; "It would pay you to install X automatic sprinklers in your factory." We might win his assent to either of the first two propositions without gaining the result we hope for; but if we win his assent to the last proposition, we shall in all probability make a sale.

This example brings us to the second thing we should try to accomplish in phrasing a proposition: Make it fit our purpose. There are, of course, many purposes that find expression in argument; but, speaking broadly, there are two main ones. One of these is to win intellectual assent and stop with that—at least, for the time being; the other is to achieve some immediate end, practical or otherwise, involving the active coöperation of reader or listener. If our purpose is of the former type, if we wish merely to create, or help to create, a favorable attitude toward some view, doctrine, or project, we may phrase our proposition impersonally and, it may be, in general terms: (1) "It is the duty of a town or city to provide adequate playgrounds for children"; (2) "Municipal politics should be divorced from state and national politics"; (3) "Coöperative associations are beneficial to college students." We are not urging any specific action; but if we can convince our readers or auditors of the truth of one of these propositions, we are helping to form a public opinion which may

lead to specific action later on. If we seek more definite and more immediate results, we should as a general rule phrase our proposition so that it includes the persons we are addressing, the persons whose action we hope to influence. To fit such a purpose, the three foregoing propositions might be made to read as follows: (1) "It is the duty of every member of the Chamber of Commerce to urge his representative in the Common Council to vote for the purchase of the John Doe Estate and its conversion into a public playground"; (2) "All good citizens of Pseudopolis, regardless of their party affiliations, should vote for the Coalition candidate for mayor"; (3) "Every student of X University should join the new coöperative association."

Definition of terms. Unless the meaning of a proposition is perfectly clear, the writer or speaker who argues on it will probably waste his words. To argue a vague proposition is usually to degenerate into mere contentiousness. In the Fifth Book of *The Republic* Plato thus states an important truth:

> Verily, Glaucon, I said, glorious is the power of the art of contradiction!
>
> Why do you say so?
>
> Because I think many a man falls into the practice against his will. When he thinks that he is reasoning he is really disputing just because he cannot define and divide, and so know that of which he is speaking; and he will pursue a merely verbal opposition in the spirit of contention and not of fair discussion.[1]

Many a dispute would be quickly ended if each disputant knew precisely what the other one meant.

In order that the proposition may be as definite as possible, every word in it that is open to reasonable doubt

[1] Jowett's translation.

or to the possibility of misunderstanding should be defined. In the proposition "Only amateurs should be eligible for membership in the Continental Athletic Association," *amateur* requires definition. The line between amateur and professional must be sharply drawn before it is possible to argue that question intelligently. Is a tennis player who earns money by writing articles on tennis an amateur? Is a college football player who does not pay for his meals at the training-table a professional? In the proposition "A league of nations will prevent war," what does *a league of nations* mean? Does it mean such a league as was proposed at the Paris Conference? or a league in which all the members have equal representation and to which all the nations, including Russia, belong? or some other kind of league?

A good example of what is meant by making a proposition unmistakably clear and definite, of unfolding its meaning until the last doubt or haziness is dissipated by definition, is found in the opening of Lincoln's first speech at Cooper Institute:

> Mr. President and Fellow Citizens of New York: The facts with which I shall deal this evening are mainly old and familiar; nor is there anything new in the general use I shall make of them. If there shall be any novelty, it will be in the mode of presenting the facts, and the inferences and observations following that presentation. In his speech last autumn at Columbus, Ohio, as reported in the *New York Times*, Senator Douglas said:
>
> "Our fathers, when they framed the government under which we live, understood this question just as well, and even better, than we do now."
>
> I fully indorse this, and I adopt it as a text for this discourse. I so adopt it because it furnishes a precise and an agreed starting-point for a discussion between Republicans and that wing of the Democracy headed by Senator Douglas. It simply leaves the inquiry: What was the understanding those fathers had of the question mentioned?

What is the frame of government under which we live? The answer must be, "The Constitution of the United States." That Constitution consists of the original, framed in 1787, and under which the present government first went into operation, and twelve subsequently framed amendments, the first ten of which were framed in 1789.

Who were our fathers that framed the Constitution? I suppose the "thirty-nine" who signed the original instrument may be fairly called our fathers who framed that part of the present government. It is almost exactly true to say they framed it, and it is altogether true to say they fairly represented the opinion and sentiment of the whole nation at that time. Their names, being familiar to nearly all, and accessible to quite all, need not now be repeated.

I take these "thirty-nine," for the present, as being "our fathers who framed the government under which we live." What is the question which, according to the text, those fathers understood "just as well, and even better, than we do now"?

It is this: Does the proper division of local from Federal authority, or anything in the Constitution, forbid our Federal Government to control as to slavery in our Federal Territories?

Upon this, Senator Douglas holds the affirmative, and Republicans the negative. This affirmation and denial form an issue; and this issue—this question—is precisely what the text declares our fathers understood "better than we."

Definition, involving as it does an interpretation of the question, should always be reasonable and impartial. No matter how widely two persons may disagree on some question of policy, they must at least agree upon the meaning of what they are arguing about; otherwise they are hopelessly at cross purposes, and are not really engaged in argument on the question itself, but merely on the meanings of words. In *Tom Jones* Fielding has burlesqued the narrow combativeness that results from unfair definition. Square and Thwackum attempt to debate whether or not any honor can exist independent of religion. Thwackum's definitions of honor and religion are as follows:

> When I mention religion, I mean the Christian religion; and not only the Christian religion, but the Protestant religion; and not only the Protestant religion, but the Church of England. And when I mention honor, I mean that mode of divine grace which is not only consistent with and dependent upon that religion, but consistent with and dependent upon no other.

Obviously nothing but a war of words can follow from such definitions as these, for they render the original question quite undebatable.

History of the question. If the question has a history, that history should be traced and examined as an essential part of the analysis. The history of a question will sometimes throw light on the entire subject, and sometimes, in addition, bring into view the most telling openings for attack. Most of the practical questions, economic, social, political, that men argue are not altogether new; they have roots in the past, arise out of long-established conditions, and may have been a long time evolving into their present forms. Failure to grasp at least something of their history means failure to comprehend the questions in all their bearings and implications.

One cannot fully understand, for instance, the sentiment that lies behind the movement to give independence to the Philippines until he becomes acquainted with the events that followed close on Dewey's attack upon the Spanish at Manilla. He must go even further back, to the causes of the Spanish War itself, in order to understand that many Americans were actuated by an altruistic feeling for the Cuban rebels; that they transferred this feeling to Aguinaldo and the other Filipinos who, they thought, were struggling for independence, and who welcomed the Americans as allies and liberators; and that consequently they resented having the United States hold the islands through military force. Such facts are worth knowing irrespective of which

side one takes in the argument. It matters little whether one is supporting or opposing the movement to change the procedure of our courts in criminal cases, or the movement to limit the use of the injunction in labor disputes, or the movement to bring about uniform divorce laws for the whole country; one can assuredly argue the questions arising from these movements, and others like them, more intelligently if he has mastered the essential facts of their history.

A knowledge of the history of a question may furnish the writer or speaker with a means of approach to a subject which shows its timeliness or its importance. Thus a brief survey of the more recent facts in the history of the movement for government ownership of public utilities is used below to show the pertinence of the discussion and its claim to serious consideration:

There has been a revival lately of proposals for and discussion of government ownership in the United States. Congress within recent years has enacted legislation creating postal-savings banks and a parcel post; and former Postmaster-General Hitchcock advocated government purchase of the telegraph lines. An act for government construction of railroads in Alaska has been passed. Senator Kenyon of Iowa has proposed that Congress create a commission to investigate the results of public ownership of railroads abroad. A committee of post-office officials lately reported in favor of acquiring the telephone lines. And Senator Kenyon and Senator Martine of New Jersey, after serving on the committee which investigated the strike, in 1913, in the coal-mines of West Virginia, reported in favor of government acquisition of all coal-mines, to prevent such strikes.

The people favored the postal-savings bank and parcel-post laws. They may have approved government construction of railroads in Alaska, although few had considered the question on its merits. Doubtless but a small minority has studied the expediency of such gigantic projects as purchase and operation of telegraphs, telephones, railways, and coal-mines. But the fact that prominent public men do make such proposals is significant. They

usually know what ideas have taken root in the public mind, and what it is prepared to receive. Most Americans still mistrust state enterprise. But the feeling is not so strong as formerly. Unless a good case shall be made against public ownership, sentiment may crystallize in favor of state telephones, telegraphs, railways, and mines. The continuance of private ownership even of farms is not certain. The movement for the single tax is in its essence a movement for the public ownership of land.

In view of these facts, serious discussion of the probable results of state socialism under the conditions in the United States is pertinent. The effects of the nationalization of merely the great public-service enterprises, such as the telephone, telegraph, and railway systems, would be numerous and important enough. Still more varied, numerous, and momentous would be the results if the coal-mines also should be made public property.[1]

The results of inquiry into the history of a question may sometimes be purely negative, the facts obtained not being useful for introductory purposes, for positive argument, or for defense. That is part of the price that occasionally has to be paid for thoroughness. But it is better economy to pay that price than to run the risk of showing unpardonable ignorance or of overlooking valuable points and suggestions.

The main issues. With the proposition stated, its terms defined, and the history of the question mastered, the next and last significant step in analysis is to determine the main issues, the pivots upon which the decision turns. A good method of procedure is to marshal the arguments for each side of the question by making a list of all the points that constitute your case, and another list of those that count against you. A comparison of these lists will bring into relief the main issues. Let us suppose that you are going to argue against the continuance of fraternities in your

[1]Samuel O. Dunn, "Some Political Phases of Government Ownership," *Atlantic Monthly*.

college. Several of your points are concerned with the evil effects of fraternities upon some of their members. In the other list there are points showing that many students have benefited by membership in a fraternity. Here is disagreement, and disagreement upon an important matter; if you can convince your readers or listeners that fraternities do more harm than good to their members, you have gained a vital point. Other points on your side tend to show that the fraternity system at your college works hardship to the students who are not members. There are, of course, arguments against you that go to show that non-fraternity students are no worse off than they would be if fraternities were abolished. Here is a second decided clash of opinion, a second issue. A third group of arguments will probably be concerned with the effect of fraternities on the college as an institution—its *esprit de corps*, and so forth—and here again difference of opinion on an important matter creates an issue. If no other important groups appear in opposition to one another, you have found the main issues.

These issues will constitute the main divisions of your argument. Assuming that the three issues just found cover the ground of your argument, your preliminary outline will be:

Fraternities at X College should be abolished, because

I. They are more harmful than beneficial to their members.
II. They are unfair to non-members.
III. They are detrimental to the college as a whole.

A glance at this outline shows that the main issues are really your chief reasons for believing in the truth of your proposition, and the chief means whereby you hope to win the assent of your readers. They also provide you a sound

basis for the selection and arrangement of your material. Whatever does not go to prove the truth of one of these three contentions is of secondary importance.

One who is seriously bent on winning an argument will not slight the points that may be brought forward by his opponents. Unless he has canvased these points thoroughly he cannot be sure that he has found all the main issues. In a debate, especially, it may prove disastrous to have an unexpected issue thrust at one.[1] Under such circumstances one cannot very well say, "That point never occurred to me. I think it is ill-founded, but I am not prepared to give my reasons just at present. If you will adjourn this meeting so that I may have time to prepare my argument, I think I can overthrow that contention." Other things being equal, that salesman, for instance, who is most fully aware of the arguments of his rivals and therefore best prepared to meet them, will do the largest business.

EXERCISES

1. Frame a proposition on each one of the following topics: Examinations as a test of a student's knowledge; Intercollegiate athletics; Student government; Coeducation in colleges; A high protective tariff; Uniform divorce laws in the United States; National prohibition; Government ownership of railroads; Conscription of wealth in time of war.

2. Phrase the following propositions so that they include the persons to whom the arguments are addressed: (*a*) Freshmen should be (should not be) allowed to play on varsity teams; (*b*) The United States should free the Philippines; (*c*) Religion should be kept out of politics; (*d*) The United States should cancel the French debt.

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[1]The term *debate* is here meant to include all face to face arguments such as occur in legislatures, courts, and public hearings, in meetings of boards of directors and of members of various organizations, discussions between salesmen and customers, etc.

3. Are the following definitions reasonable and adequate? Are there any terms which should be defined, but are not?

(*a*) The states should establish schedules of minimum wages for unskilled laborers.

i. By *states* is meant the various states of the Union.
ii. By *minimum wages* is meant the lowest wages which storekeepers may pay.
iii. By *unskilled laborers* is meant workers, male or female.

(*b*) The growth of trusts tends toward socialism.

i. By *growth* is meant the increase in size.
ii. By *trusts* is meant very large corporations.
iii. By *socialism* is meant economic equality.

(*c*) The tendency of population to concentrate in the cities of the United States is detrimental to the best interests of the people.

i. By *population* is meant the people of the country.
ii. By *cities* is meant large cities.
iii. By *detrimental* is meant harmful.
iv. By *best interests* is meant welfare.
v. By *people* is meant not only the people of the cities but those outside as well.

(*d*) Lobbying in Congress should be restricted to licensed lobbyists.

i. *Restricted* means that only licensed lobbyists shall have the privilege of lobbying.
ii. *Licensed lobbyists* are those who have paid a fee and registered their names with the proper officer designated by congress for that purpose.

(*e*) Football, as at present played in American colleges, is demoralizing.

i. *Demoralizing* means interfering with college work.

4. In the propositions given in Exercise 2 what terms need to be defined?

5. Arrange in chronological order what seem to you the important facts in the history of one of the following questions: (*a*) Should the teaching of evolution be prohibited in public educa-

tional institutions? (*b*) Should there be an amendment to the Federal Constitution giving Congress the power to regulate child labor? (*c*) Should the coal mines of the United States be nationalized? (With the permission of your instructor, you may substitute some question in which you are particularly interested.)

6. Determine the main issues involved in arguing one of the propositions that you framed in Exercise 1.

7. As practice in analysis, frame a proposition advocating the abolition or radical change of some institution or custom in your college. See to it that this proposition is fairly debatable. Define your terms, assemble all the arguments on either side that you can think of, and determine the main issues. (If all the members of the class use the same proposition, their results may be discussed in class—one student putting his on the blackboard, the others offering comment and suggestion.)

III. Planning the Argument

Introductory. As a result of the analysis of the question we now see our subject in its larger aspects—and in many of its details, too, no doubt—and are ready to plan the argument in part, at least. But instead of using the kind of outline that served us in writing exposition we should work out a specialized form of outline known as a "brief." One of the advantages of the brief is its firmly-knit structure, which helps us to put every bit of proof in the right place and helps us even more to exclude material that really does not add to our proof of the proposition. Brief-drawing is an excellent corrective for loose and hazy thinking; it challenges us constantly to think clearly and purposefully. Even if in later life we do not actually write out formal briefs in preparation for the arguments in which we engage, the ability to do so will stand us in good stead; we shall approach our task with greater confidence and with clearer perception of how to marshal our reasons.

THE BRIEF

What a brief is. A brief is a logical outline of an argument. It exhibits the framework of evidence upon which an argument is built. An adequate brief should show unmistakably what the course of reasoning is and the evidence upon which the writer's conclusions are based. There are several forms of brief, each useful in its way, but we shall confine our attention to that type widely introduced into college use by Professor George P. Baker. The following brief, based upon Webster's letter to Lord Ashburton on the subject of the impressment of American seamen (one of the finest of American state documents) illustrates the standard method of brief drawing:

Letter On Impressment[1]

Introduction

I. The government of the United States sees no utility in negotiation upon the subject of impressment unless the British government is willing to renounce the practice in future wars.

II. Impressment is used in this argument to mean the seizure by British cruisers in time of war of supposed British subjects among the crews of neutral American merchant vessels.

III. Impressment has long had a disturbing influence upon the political relations of the two countries.

1. From the beginning of the French revolution to the war of 1812 hardly a year passed without complaint and remonstrance.
2. It was one of the causes of the war of 1812.

IV. All attempts at settlement by negotiation have failed.

1. Negotiation to abolish the practice has failed.
2. Negotiation to secure its temporary suspension has failed.
3. Negotiation to limit its exercise and afford some security against its abuses has failed.
4. The nearest approach to settlement was the convention of 1803, which was broken off because the British government insisted on excepting the *narrow seas* from the proposed agreement.

[1]The letter is printed in the Appendix (page 621).

V. England asserts the right of impressment.

1. She asserts this as a legal exercise of the prerogative of the crown.

2. This prerogative is alleged to be founded on the English law of perpetual allegiance of the subject and his obligation to render military service to the crown whenever required.

Brief Proper

The government of the United States is justified in the stand it now takes that hereafter the practice of impressing seamen from American merchant vessels cannot be allowed, for

I. Impressment is indefensible in principle, for

A. It cannot legally be enforced outside English jurisdiction, for

1. It is an interference with the rights of other nations, for

(a) It assumes to exercise extra-territorial authority to the injury of citizens of other states on board their own vessels on the high seas.

(b) The entry of a belligerent into a neutral vessel on the high seas is a trespass, for

x. Every merchant vessel on the high seas is a part of the territory of the country to which she belongs, for

(A) That is the law of nations.

2. There is no sanction for it in the code of nations, for

a. It is only a doctrine of English law.

b. The prerogatives of the crown of England have no obligations on persons domiciled abroad, for

x. The same claims applied with equal justice to the property of such persons are unheard of, for

(A) No government thinks of controlling the property of persons domiciled abroad.

(B) No government thinks of entering the territory of another power to seize such property.

y. This is the opinion of eminent authority.

B. The claim to perpetual allegiance is unjust to British immigrants to the United States, for

1. It embroils them in a double and contradictory allegiance, for

a. They owe allegiance to the United States, for

x. In time of peace England casts them off, for

(A) She encourages emigration, for

(1) She acknowledges herself overburdened with population of the poorer classes.

(2) She uses public funds to assist their conveyance, for

(x) She regards every instance of the emigration of such persons as a benefit.

y. The United States becomes their adopted country, for

(1) Its language, laws, and usages are congenial to them.

(2) In the United States they leave poverty and overcrowded cities behind them and find employment, comfort, and prosperity.

(3) It receives them generously, for

(a) Public and private charities are severely taxed to care for their immediate wants, for

(x) Many arrive in great destitution.

(b) It grants them the enjoyment of all civil rights.

(4) They look to its laws and institutions for their protection.

b. In time of war they are liable to be torn away from their new employments, political relations, and domestic connections and forced to fight for a country that is no longer their own.

II. Impressment infringes the rights of American citizens, for

A. Many American citizens have been impressed, for

1. Even when the purpose of the visiting officer is honest, discrimination between American citizens and British subjects is difficult.

2. The lieutenant of a man-of-war is apt to be a summary judge, for

a. He has need of men.

a′. He has the power to take them.

3. In less than one year the American minister made application for the discharge of 271 seamen, most of whom, in his opinion, were American citizens.

III. Impressment works injury to American shipping, for

A. Vessels suffer from being left short-handed, for

1. Voyages are often delayed for this cause.
2. Voyages are sometimes broken up for this cause.

B. In times of European war it is difficult to obtain seamen, for

1. Men are deterred from going to sea by the fear of being impressed, for

a. They know of undoubted cases of Americans being made to serve for years on British men-of-war before they could obtain release.

Conclusion

I. Since the principle on which impressment is founded is indefensible;

II. Since impressment infringes the rights of American citizens;

III. Since impressment works injury to American shipping;

Therefore, the government of the United States is justified in the stand it now takes that hereafter the practice of impressing seamen from American merchant vessels cannot be allowed.

Corollary:

Its rule in the future will be that in every regularly documented American merchant vessel the crew who navigate it will find their protection in the flag which is over them.

Characteristics of brief form. An examination of the foregoing brief will bring to light the chief characteristics of brief form. The brief is divided into three parts: the introduction, which gives the setting for the argument; the brief proper, which gives the proposition and its proof; and the conclusion, which sums up the argument of the brief proper. Each separate item is in the form of a complete statement. In the brief proper each statement is preceded by a symbol (figure or letter) which, together with indention, indicates its position and relation in the

argument. Statements that depend upon other statements for support are followed by "for" or "because." The headings marked I, II, and III, which are called main headings, give direct support to the proposition. In like manner the subheadings marked A and B give support to the main heads under which they stand; and similarly, the minor heads indicated by 1 and 2 support the statements A, B, etc. Headings which have the same order of symbols are coördinate in rank: thus II and III are coördinate, as are III A and III B, and 1 and 2 under III A. A brief should be read downward from the proposition as follows: "The government of the United States is justified in the stand it now takes that hereafter the practice of impressing seamen from American merchant vessels cannot be allowed, for III. impressment works injury to American shipping, for B. in times of European war it is difficult to obtain seamen, for 1. men are deterred from going to sea by the fear of being impressed, for a. they know of undoubted cases of Americans being made to serve for years on British men-of-war before they could obtain release." Each link in the chain of reasoning is thus made distinct and clear, while "the truths," to quote *Sartor Resartus*, "all stand in a row, each holding by the skirts of the other."

Rules for brief drawing. Unless otherwise specified by the instructor, all briefs drawn up in connection with the work of the course should conform to the following rules:

1. A brief should be divided into three parts: the first marked Introduction; the second, Brief Proper; the third, Conclusion.

2. Each item of the brief should be phrased as a single complete statement.

3. Each item should be preceded by a symbol to show its relation to other items, and should have the same indention

as its coördinate headings. The same order of symbols should be used for coördinate headings.[1]

4. The introduction should give whatever information is useful to an understanding of the argument. No disputed matter or statements requiring proof should be included in the introduction.

5. The brief proper should contain the proposition and its proof. Each main head should be proof of the proposition, and each subhead should be proof of the heading to which it is subordinate. The proper connectives between any heading and its subordinate headings are "for" and "because." Such connectives as "therefore" and "hence" are inadmissible.

6. In refutation, the argument to be refuted should be stated; e.g., "The argument that concession on the part of England will lead to further demands is unsound, for . . ."; "The objection that my plan of conciliation will give peace but no revenue, does not hold, for . . . "; "Although it is argued that members try to attain high scholarship for the honor of the society, yet this contention is weak, for . . ."

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[1]For the sake of uniformity the following systems of symbols are recommended:
System One:
The Proposition to be Proved, for
I....., for
A....., for
1....., for
a.....
b....., for
x.....
y.....
z....., for
(A)....., for
(1).....
System Two:
The Proposition to be Proved, for
1....., for
1^1....., for
1^2....., for
1^3.....
2^3.....
2^1....., for
1^2.....
2^2.....
3^2.....

7. Arguments whose force is felt only when they are coupled together may be given the same symbol distinguished only by the mark of prime, as in II.A.2.a and a′. of our illustration.

8. The conclusion should be a recapitulation of the main arguments followed by an affirmation of the proposition.

EXERCISES

1. As preliminary practice in brief drawing, make a brief of "A Plea for Argumentation," printed in the Appendix (page 619).

2. Criticize the following brief and correct errors in brief form:

SHOULD CAPITAL PUNISHMENT BE ABOLISHED?

Introduction

I. Capital punishment means inflicting the death penalty for murder.

II. Murder is the unlawful killing of a human being with malice aforethought.

Brief Proper

Capital punishment should be abolished, for

A. Crimes that were once punished by death are now punished in other ways, because

1. Stealing a sheep was formerly punished by death.

B. The argument that capital punishment is upheld by the Bible is unsound, for

1. It is contrary to the teaching of Christ.
2. There are passages in the Old Testament that do not agree with the Mosaic law, and the Mosaic law was intended only for the Hebrews and is not binding upon us.

a. The passages referred to are Gen. 4: 14, 15 and Ex. 20: 13.

C. Jurors hesitate to convict a man if they feel that the death penalty will result, hence
   a. Fewer murderers are convicted in states which use capital punishment than would be the case if murder were punished by life imprisonment.
      1. That this is true is proved by statistics.

D. Many innocent persons have been made to suffer the death penalty, their innocence being proved after it was too late, because
   1. If they had been imprisoned instead they might have been released as soon as their innocence was established.

E. Where capital punishment is used the law is not justly administered, for
   a. Whoever heard of a rich man being electrocuted? for
      (1) He hires an expensive lawyer who makes the jury believe that his client was insane.
      (2) After a few months in an asylum he is allowed to go free, because
         x. Some hired specialist says that he is now in normal condition.
   b. The poor man cannot afford expensive lawyers and experts and therefore
      1. Is convicted.

F. The argument that capital punishment is necessary to protect society is disproved by the fact that there is no capital punishment in Maine or in Rhode Island, for
   1. Capital punishment has been abolished in both of those states.
   2. The crime of murder has not increased since the abolition of capital punishment, for
      a. As a matter of fact the citizens of Portland or Providence are less frequently murdered than are the citizens of New York or Chicago.
   3. Life is held cheapest in those states where lynchings most frequently occur, for
      a. Lynching is an extreme form of capital punishment.

4. Capital punishment does not protect society, for
   b. It does not prevent murder, for
      (1) The murderer either
         (*a*) Does not stop to think of the punishment
         (*b*) Or feels certain that he will escape.

Conclusion

Therefore, capital punishment should be abolished, since it is not in harmony with humane and highly civilized ideals of conduct and tends to brutalize society.

IV. Proving the Proposition

Introductory. With a brief in hand to guide us, to show us at what points our material for argument seems fairly complete and at what points lacking, we have made material advance toward the proving of our proposition. This is partly a constructive, and partly a critical, process. We gather all the available facts that bear on the question and reason from these in support of the proposition; and we scan these facts as closely as circumstances will allow to make sure that they really are facts, and examine our reasoning to assure ourselves that it is sensible. It is a waste of time to build up an elaborate argument on the basis of what we assume to be facts only to have somebody come along and show us that our "facts" are merely guesses or products of imagination. It is not pleasant to have it demonstrated that we have made a foolish use of facts laboriously gathered.

We cannot, of course, expect to prove a proposition in argument in the sense in which we prove a proposition in geometry. Our proof of a proposition will not establish its truth beyond the shadow of reasonable doubt unless the question is so one-sided as to be no real question at all. In law and in science arguments are sometimes carried to the

point of demonstration. Very seldom in ordinary affairs can proof be carried so far. And college students rarely, if ever, have the occasion or the means for so doing. As was said earlier in this chapter, if we can establish a reasonable presumption in favor of our view or opinion, we are doing all that can rightly be expected of us, all that is done in the vast majority of successful arguments.

Nevertheless, we should be able to discriminate between sound and superficial arguments. In practice work in composition and in most arguments in business and politics, it would be pedantic to imagine that all the standards set forth in this section will be lived up to. But we should try to maintain them as far as practical limitations of time and opportunity permit.

Evidence distinguished from assertion. Evidence is whatever tends to prove the truth or falsity of a proposition. In general, proving a point consists in establishing the facts pertinent to the case and drawing logical conclusions therefrom. Established facts are the foundations on which solid arguments are built. The whole cunningly devised structure of a specious argument based on assertion or assumption may come tumbling to the ground for lack of such foundations. Jonathan Swift's delightful argument to prove that Partridge, the astrologer, was dead dissolved in laughter in the presence of one incontrovertible fact, the enraged and lively Partridge himself.

Two types of evidence. For convenience we shall consider evidence under two heads: (1) Testimonial Evidence, the direct testimony of witnesses, or the opinions of authorities; and (2) Circumstantial Evidence, the "mute testimony" of facts and circumstances. The former is usually the simpler to handle, and for the general purposes of this discussion may be more briefly dismissed. If, however, we

were looking at argument from the legal point of view, we should need to give much attention to testimonial evidence, especially to the direct testimony of witnesses, for the cross-examination of witnesses offers the lawyer a field for the exercise of all his skill and acuteness.

1. *Testimonial Evidence*

The credibility of the witness. (a) *Fairness.* The value of direct testimony to facts and of the opinions of an authority depends on the credibility of the witness. Is the witness both fair and competent? Then his statements carry weight. The word of a known falsifier, swindler, or moral bankrupt is not worth much. But in judging the credibility of witnesses we seldom deal with intentional deception but rather with prejudices and predilections that lead a man to distort or suppress the truth, though unconsciously and with full belief in his statements. Men are prone to find what they seek, and to overlook what they do not wish to see. It is not necessary to impugn a man's honesty to show that he is biased for or against a particular view and hence that his testimony must be taken with caution and scrutiny. If two men equally honest and equal in other respects report on the industrial and social conditions of their city, we may reasonably expect a divergence of testimony if one is a socialist, the other an individualist: one will have keener eyes for social injustice and inequalities, for the handicaps of unfavorable environment, for harsh contrasts of luxury and poverty; the other, for social opportunities held out to those who can take them, for the rewards given to superior energy, pluck, industry, and brains. It follows from this that to show a witness's impartiality is to strengthen his testimony; and conversely, that to exhibit his prejudices is to weaken it.

(b) *Competence.* Is the witness competent to know or to judge of the facts whereof he speaks? Concerning everyday facts and occurrences anybody not mentally deranged or intoxicated may be competent to speak. It is not necessary to have special knowledge or training to answer such questions as "Was the little girl running or standing still when the car struck her?" "When you first saw the fire, was it burning in the basement or in the upper stories?" etc. When some special knowledge or training is needed for the accurate reporting of facts, the witness must then be properly qualified if his testimony is to be seriously reckoned with. Not everyone, for example, is qualified to recognize a specimen of *Prunus Americana:*

> A rare plant in New England, scarcely attaining tree-form. The most northern station yet reported is along the slopes of Graylock, Massachusetts, where a few scattered shrubs were discovered in 1900 (J. R. Churchill). In Connecticut it seems to be native in the vicinity of Southington, shrubs, and small trees 10-15 feet high (C. H. Bissell *in lit.*, 1900); New Milford and Munroe, small trees (C. K. Averill).[1]

The value of the testimony of Messrs. Churchill, Bissell, and Averill in this case depends upon the fact that they are competent botanists, trained to make distinctions that would escape the ordinary observer. This is "expert testimony" in its simplest form.

Argument from authority. When expert testimony concerns itself with more than the establishment of facts, and expresses opinions and judgments, its value rests wholly upon what is known of the witness. If he speaks as an authority upon his subject, his opinion will have weight. An illustration will show us what it means to speak as an

[1]Dame and Brooks, *Handbook of the Trees of New England.*

authority upon a subject. Let us suppose that A's sanity is in question. B says A is insane; C declares he is not. B is a wholesale shoe merchant; he has read *Jane Eyre* and a novel of Charles Reade's (title forgotten) also dealing with insanity; four years previously the wife of his next-door neighbor was declared insane and he heard many things about her behavior from his wife and daughter. C, after graduating from medical school was for three years an interne in the insane ward of Bellevue Hospital; was Assistant Superintendent and then Superintendent of the State Asylum at Y; is now professor of mental diseases at X Medical School; is the author of several treatises on insanity, two of which are used as standard reference books in all important medical schools. There can be no reasonable doubt of C's greater competence to speak concerning A's sanity, and the greater weight of his testimony. C is an expert in such matters, and his views may properly be cited as those of an authority.

In all specialized fields of activity and of knowledge some men, through training and experience, have won the right to a respectful hearing. In a question of football tactics the advice of a successful coach is sooner heeded than that of a freshman on the second eleven. In matters of finance the opinion of the great banker is more valuable than that of the successful coach. The banker gives way to the engineer when the discussion turns to bridges, the engineer makes room for the surgeon when operations are in question, the surgeon defers to the actuary when a new scheme of insurance is being debated. In general, those men to whom we turn for the most accurate and reliable information on a subject are the authorities to cite in our arguments.

The importance of argument from authority is likely to vary somewhat with the degree of technicality of the subject

under discussion. If the question is highly technical, the layman is apt to try to ascertain the best expert opinion, shaping his own opinion accordingly. Medicine and science furnish abundant illustrations. When the child's life is in danger from a grave illness and the wisdom of performing a certain operation is in question, most parents will feel themselves incompetent to pass final judgment; instead of examining all the evidence for themselves and reasoning out an independent opinion or carefully weighing opposing arguments, they are more likely to make their decision upon what seems to them the most authoritative medical judgment. Similarly, in forming opinions on abstruse or complicated scientific questions the tendency is strong to defer to authority. Convince a man that the best mathematical opinion upholds the validity of geometry in four dimensions and he is likely to accept the fourth dimension as a mathematical fact, though it contradicts the evidence of his senses and he is unable to follow the mathematical demonstration. In such cases argument from authority is at its strongest. It is usually much less decisive when the question is such that an ordinarily intelligent person feels able to weigh the evidence. If he feels himself competent to judge, a thinking man is not willing, as a rule, to follow authorities to the extent of blindly accepting their conclusions.

Practically, then, the more comprehensible or approachable one's subject, the less should reliance be placed on argument from authority. If one were arguing the superiority of the British wire-wound naval gun over the American type, he might safely put much faith in the testimony of Captains X, Y, and Z of the United States Navy, widely recognized as authorities on ordnance and naval equipment. But if the question were whether or not the United States should maintain a navy equal to Great

Britain's, the opinions of these officers or of any naval officers would be relatively much less convincing. They might be quoted to give added weight to one's argument or to provide an opening wedge for it by showing that one's own view of the question is taken by certain men of sound judgment who have presumably given much thought to national defense. To expect, however, that an array of expert opinion would convince intelligent citizens in this case, would be shortsighted; they would rely upon expert testimony for the facts, but would feel capable of understanding the reasoning based upon the facts and of deciding between opposing arguments. To argue the question for them as though they were unable to judge for themselves would be utterly tactless, implying an intolerable intellectual condescension on the part of the writer, as though he were a sage addressing little children.

References to testimony. To be convincing the use of testimonial evidence, whether direct testimony to fact or expression of expert opinion, must be specific. Otherwise, how is real testimony to be distinguished from loose opinion, hearsay, or, in the last analysis, conjecture itself? The difference in carrying power between "they say," or "I have read," or "I have often heard," and "Hiram Blank, engineer in charge of the electrification of the Great C. Y. and T. R. R., says (*Electrical World*, January, 1924, page 236)" is obvious.

2. *Circumstantial Evidence*

Circumstantial evidence compared with direct testimony. Under some conditions circumstantial evidence is quite as convincing as direct testimony. Huxley gives clear expression to this fact in one of his lectures, a paragraph of which is reprinted on the next page.

Suppose that a man tells you that he saw a person strike another and kill him; that is testimonial evidence of the fact of murder. But it is possible to have circumstantial evidence of the fact of murder; that is to say, you may find a man dying with a wound upon his head having exactly the form and character of the wound which is made with an ax, and, with due care in taking surrounding circumstances into account, you may conclude with the utmost certainty that the man has been murdered; that his death is the consequence of a blow inflicted by another man with that implement. We are very much in the habit of considering circumstantial evidence as of less value than testimonial evidence, and it may be that, where the circumstances are not perfectly clear and intelligible, it is a dangerous and unsafe kind of evidence; but it must not be forgotten that, in many cases, circumstantial evidence is quite as conclusive as testimonial evidence, and that, not unfrequently, it is a great deal weightier than testimonial evidence. For example, take the case to which I referred just now. The circumstantial evidence may be better and more convincing than the testimonial evidence; for it may be impossible, under the conditions that I have defined, to suppose that the man met his death from any cause but the violent blow of an ax wielded by another man. The circumstantial evidence in favor of a murder having been committed, in that case, is as complete and as convincing as evidence can be. It is evidence which is open to no doubt and to no falsification. But the testimony of a witness is open to multitudinous doubts. He may have been mistaken. He may have been actuated by malice. It has constantly happened that even an accurate man has declared that a thing has happened in this, that, or the other way, when a careful analysis of the circumstantial evidence has shown that it did not happen in that way, but in some other.[1]

Circumstantial evidence cumulative. Circumstantial evidence, in general, is cumulative in its power to convince. It is strongest when a series of facts or circumstances all point in one direction. Suppose that an ax is found near the dead man mentioned by Huxley, and suppose that upon it there is blood which proves, upon analysis, to be human

[1] *American Addresses*, "First Lecture on Evolution."

blood. Our first hypothesis that the man received a blow from an ax is transformed into strong probability. If, in addition to the blood, a few hairs, corresponding exactly with those of the dead man, are found adhering to the ax, the evidence is convincing. Charles Reade gives an example of the reënforcing power of one piece of evidence when coupled with another:

> A was found dead of a gunshot wound, and the singed paper that had been used for wadding lay near him. It was a fragment of the *Times*. B's house was searched, and they found there a gun recently discharged, and the copy of the *Times* from which the singed paper aforesaid had been torn; the pieces fitted exactly.
>
> The same thing happened in France with a slight variation; the paper used for wadding was part of an old breviary, subsequently found in the suspected man's house.
>
> The salient facts of each case made a treble coincidence. What was the result? The treble coincidence, sworn, cross-examined, and unshaken, hanged the Englishman and guillotined the Frenchman. In neither case was there a scintilla of direct evidence; in neither case was the verdict impugned.
>
> I speak within bounds when I say that a genuine double coincidence, proved beyond doubt, is not twice, but two hundred times, as strong as one such coincidence, and that a genuine treble coincidence is many thousand times as strong as one such coincidence.[1]

The basis of circumstantial evidence. The reasoning involved in circumstantial evidence is often complicated. We shall attempt to simplify our discussion by considering only the more typical kinds. Understanding these and the common tests of their validity, the student should be able to judge the soundness of most of his own, or of his opponent's, arguments. As a preliminary we should understand that circumstantial evidence derives its force ultimately from a deep-rooted faith in the law of cause and effect. All human experience goes to show that nothing

[1]Quoted by Hammond Lamont, *English Composition*, pp. 204-205 (slightly emended).

takes place without a cause, that everything is the effect or the result of something that has operated previously, or is operating, and has brought, or is bringing, it to pass. Thus in the case of the man mentioned by Huxley we at once take it for granted that the wound on his head is the effect produced by some cause; we never question that it had a cause, but proceed to examine all possible causes in order to find the one most probable.

Argument from effect to cause. In the argument from effect to cause we try to show that A, which is known, must have been caused by B, which is unknown; or, to put it more modestly, that B is the probable cause of A. We make judgments of this kind every day with such facility that they are almost instantaneous. Footprints in the garden-bed signify to us at once that someone has been walking there; the odor of tobacco in a room suggests that someone has been smoking; a particular series of trills coming from a thicket leads us to the conclusion that a catbird is singing. We recognize these as valid judgments without further proof. In more complicated or important cases, however, we must submit our reasoning to two well-recognized tests of its validity.

(1) *Is the assumed cause the only probable one?* Could the known result have been produced by any other cause than the one we assume? The country, for example, undergoes a period of business depression. In a political argument the cause is said to be a change in the tariff. But suppose that at about the time when the new tariff goes into operation there has been a serious failure of staple crops or a great over-production of manufactures. Is it not possible that either of these might have brought about the depression? If the contention that the tariff is the cause of hard times is to carry conviction, the tariff must be shown to be the more probable cause. The strength of this entire argu-

ment from effect to cause will depend upon the extent to which possible causes except the one assigned may be eliminated.

(2) *Could the assumed cause have produced the effect?* Is the assumed cause sufficient to have brought about the known result? An argument at once falls to the ground if it can be shown that the assumed cause is not sufficient. Insufficient cause weakens a thousand popular arguments: "Untiring energy was the cause of his success." Partly, no doubt; but energy needs to be intelligently applied and directed. "It was study of the Bible that made Lincoln such a mighty wielder of the English language." If that was the real cause, why are there not as many "mighty wielders" as there are close students of the Bible? Careful writers will buttress their arguments at this point with evidence of sufficiency. In the following extract John Tyndall is arguing that the power ice has of "accommodating itself to the channel through which it moves" in a glacier is not due to viscosity but to regelation, and he takes pains to show that regelation is a sufficient cause of the phenomenon by citing a variety of evidence:

> Here are two masses [of ice], which I have just cut asunder by a saw; I place their flat surfaces together; half a minute's contact will suffice; they are now frozen together, and by taking hold of one of them I thus lift them both.
>
> This is the effect to which attention was first directed by Mr. Faraday in June 1850, and which is now known under the name of Regelation. On a hot summer's day, I have gone into a shop in the Strand where fragments of ice were exposed in a basin in the window; and with the shopman's permission have laid hold of the topmost piece of ice, and by means of it have lifted the whole of the pieces bodily out of the dish. Though the thermometer at the time stood at 80°, the pieces of ice had frozen together at their points of junction. Even under hot water this effect takes place; I have here a basin of water as hot as my hand can bear; I plunge into it these two pieces of ice, and hold them together

for a moment: they are now frozen together, notwithstanding the presence of the heated liquid. A pretty experiment of Mr. Faraday's is to place a number of small fragments of ice in a dish of water deep enough to float them. When one piece touches the other, if only at a single point, regelation instantly sets in. Thus a train of pieces may be caused to touch each other, and, after they have once so touched, you may take the terminal piece of the train, and, by means of it, draw all the others after it. When we seek to bend two pieces thus united at their point of junction, the frozen points suddenly separate by fracture, but at the same moment other points come into contact, and regelation sets in between them. Thus a wheel of ice might be caused to roll on an icy surface, the contacts being incessantly ruptured, with a crackling noise, and others as quickly established by regelation. In virtue of this property of regelation, ice is able to reproduce many of the phenomena which are usually ascribed to viscous bodies.

Here, for example, is a straight bar of ice: I can by passing it successively through a series of molds, each more curved than the last, finally turn it out as a semi-ring. The straight bar in being squeezed into the curved mold breaks, but by continuing the pressure new surfaces come into contact, the continuity of the mass is restored . . .

. . . Thus, you see, broken ice can be compacted together by pressure, and in virtue of the property of regelation, which cements its touching surfaces, the substance may be made to take any shape we please. Were the experiment worth the trouble, I feel satisfied that I could form *a rope of ice* from this block, and afterwards coil the rope into a knot. Nothing of course can be easier than to produce statuettes of the substance from suitable molds.

It is easy to understand how a substance so endowed can be squeezed through the gorges of the Alps—can bend so as to accommodate itself to the flexures of the Alpine valleys, and can permit of differential motion of its parts, without at the same time possessing a sensible trace of viscosity. The hypothesis of viscosity, first started by Rendo, and worked out with such ability by Professor Forbes, accounts, certainly, for half the facts. Where pressure comes into play, the deportment of ice is apparently that of a viscous body; where tension comes into play, the analogy with a viscous body ceases.[1]

[1] *Heat Considered as a Mode of Motion*, Lecture VI.

Argument from cause to effect. In the argument from cause to effect we try to show that a known cause A will produce the unknown effect B. We see, for example, a cause operating in the present and predict from this a definite result in the future. In cases in which the relations of cause and effect are well known and it is possible to forestall the operation of other forces that might check the result following from a given cause, we make predictions with full confidence in their validity. The reason one is careful not to put his hand in the fire, or walk off the edge of a high cliff, or drop a valuable bit of china, is that he can predict unpleasant results with certainty. The surgeon administers ether or cocaine with a reasonable certainty that it will produce anaesthesia. But when the relation between cause and effect is not so immediate and apparent and when there is a possibility that other forces may check or nullify the operation of the cause, our prediction loses force. Under such conditions—and they are by far the most usual in argument—the most we can hope to do is to establish a presumption in our favor. Nine times out of ten the predictions of the U. S. Weather Bureau are correct, but in the case of any single prediction there is always the possibility of error. Hence, of any given official prediction of weather we may say that there is a strong presumption in its favor; and this is the most that may be said for it until the day in question has passed and its weather has become actual matter of fact.

In order to keep our arguments from cause to effect within the bounds of reasonable presumption we should first make sure that the cause is capable of producing the effect predicted; for if the cause cannot be shown to be sufficient, any argument based upon it is evidently worth little. Having satisfied ourselves that the cause is sufficient, we should then try to determine whether or not there are

other causes that may alter or nullify the effect predicted. If so, they may render an argument from cause to effect quite inconclusive. Such and such a thing will result, we say, if nothing happens to prevent it. To what extent can we foresee that nothing will intervene between the known cause and the assumed result? Between holding one's hand in the fire and the burn which will result, nothing, we are certain, will intervene. But between continued immigration into the United States (as a cause) and the overthrow of American institutions (as a result), many things may intervene—the Americanization of the immigrants, for example. The more forces at work side by side, the more time elapsing between known cause and predicted effect, the more difficult it is to establish a presumption that a given cause will not be checked in its operation. The uncertainty attending predictions of the rise or fall of stocks on the Exchange is an instance in point. Yet men act, and properly, on the basis of presumption: they vote in legislatures on such questions as the restriction of immigration and they buy and sell stocks. Whenever real proof is out of the question and reasonable presumption is the most that we can look for, we should try to see that the balance of probability is in our favor. In most arguments dealing with future events reasonable presumption is the highest degree of proof attainable, and the attempt to attain it is therefore not always to be unfavorably compared with rigorous scientific methods. Even the most scrupulously logical of scientists, when he puts money in the bank, has no more than a reasonable presumption that he will ever be able to get it out again.

Argument from analogy. We argue from analogy when we infer that because two objects are similar in one or more points they will be similar in some further respect. We

assume that if "a certain proposition is true of one, therefore it is true of the other."[1] Jeremy Ammidon was arguing from analogy when he said: "Why, it's only reasonable that a country's got to be run like a ship, from the quarter-deck. How far do you suppose a vessel would get if the crew hung about aft and chose representatives from the port and starboard watches and galley for a body to lay the course and make sail?"[2] So the child who has been stung by a bee reasons when he avoids other insects that look like bees. The scientist argues from analogy when he infers that light, having properties of reflection, diffraction, and refraction similar to those of sound, has a further resemblance to sound in the property of being propagated by waves. A student uses the argument from analogy when he tries to show from the example of X University that the honor system will work well at Y University. The two institutions, he argues, are not essentially different; Y students are not inferior in character or in seriousness of purpose to X students. From such resemblances he draws the inference that if the honor system has raised the standard of honesty in college work at X University and improved the relations between students and faculty, it will do the same at Y University.

The main tests to apply to an argument from analogy are as follows:

(1) *Similarity in essential points.* Are the two things compared really similar in essential points? A merely superficial resemblance is a poor basis for argument. To take an exaggerated instance of this, the child who has been stung by a bee sees a superficial resemblance between the bee and many other little winged insects and so is terrorized

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[1]John Stuart Mill, *System of Logic.*
[2]Joseph Hergesheimer, *Java Head.*

by a blue-bottle fly that has no power of stinging him—the fly is about the size of the bee, has wings, makes a buzzing sound against the window-pane, and so the child reaches a wrong conclusion. This error, we say, is due to a lack of observation of essential points of difference. And that is the cause of weakness in many an argument. The citizen of Texas who sees that a railroad in New Jersey can carry passengers at a profit for so many cents a mile, and argues therefrom that a railroad in Texas can do the same, has failed to observe an essential point of difference—the much greater density of population in New Jersey. He may be right, but he cannot establish his rightness on grounds of analogy in this case, for the conditions under which the two railroads operate are different in at least one important respect; for manifestly, if one road carries twenty passengers to every one carried by the other, it can afford a smaller margin of profit.

It is not necessary that the two things compared shall be alike in all known particulars, but they must be similar in important points that bear on the question at issue. To revert to a preceding illustration: X University and Y University may differ in a thousand and one details, but if they are alike in character and ideals and their students are of the same general type, it is reasonable to argue that the kind of honor system which has proved successful in one of these institutions will prove successful in the other.

(2) *Essential differences.* Are there important differences between the things compared? We should be on our guard against letting the fascination of an analogy lead us into making assumptions that fit our theory but do not fit the facts. Brilliant parallels, for example, have been drawn between the Roman Republic and the United States; both are republics, and therefore, it is assumed, are the two analogous in the methods of government. But this is to

overlook the vital fact that the principle of representation makes the American republic very different in its workings from the Roman.

Argument by generalization. If we find that a certain thing is true of a number of objects in any particular class, we are apt to express that truth in a general statement which is then assumed to be true of all the objects in the class. A perfect generalization is based on an observation of all the objects forming a class. The statement, for example, that all the states in the Union have governors, legislatures, and written constitutions is a perfect generalization because it is based on observation of all the objects included in the class. There cannot be a single exception to the truth of the statement. Quite as perfect for all purposes except those of logical distinction are the generalizations known as "laws of nature"—Boyle's law, the law of falling bodies, the law of gravitation, and so on. But the greater number of generalizations employed in argument are incomplete, are not based on a knowledge of all the individuals composing the class. We get along with them because they are the best to be had under the circumstances; but we must not forget that they express probability rather than certainty. Concerning the degree of probability that an incomplete generalization expresses—that is, the amount of reliance we may reasonably place upon it—we should ask:

(1) *Are the objects on which the generalization is based fairly representative of their class?* How important a bearing this question may have on the worth of a generalization may be seen in a variety of practical, everyday instances. For example, suppose a coffee-merchant is considering the purchase of a thousand sacks of coffee of the highest grade. Samples may be submitted to him by the seller, but will he base his conclusion as to the quality of the whole consignment upon these samples? Assuredly not, unless he is

guaranteed against loss in case some of the coffee is of a cheaper grade than he thought he was buying. Before he has any faith in the generalization that the coffee in each of the sacks is of the highest grade, he will examine specimens from different sacks widely separated and not always the easiest to be reached. For another example, suppose a student has been asked to join a certain club or fraternity. He is acquainted with six or eight of the thirty members and finds them to be likable and worthy of respect; if the membership as a whole is of the same high quality, he would be glad to join the organization. But unless he has reason to believe that the members he knows are fairly representative of the group, he has not a solid basis for a generalization concerning the membership as a whole. For all he knows to the contrary these six or eight persons of his acquaintance may be far above the average of the group; they may have been put forward for that very reason while an equal, or perhaps greater, number of undesirables have been kept in the background. In such a case an over-hasty generalization might lead to regret later on. Common sense, therefore, would tell him to seek a wider acquaintance among the members of the group—a suggestion which brings us to the second question we should ask concerning a generalization:

(2) *Is the generalization based on observation of a sufficient proportion of the objects composing the class?* If we can be assured that we are dealing with typical specimens of the class, we can safely generalize on a very small proportion of the total number. Generalizations in the science of hydraulics, for instance, need not be based on experiments conducted with waters from ten thousand wells, cisterns, springs, streams, and ponds; a single normal source of supply is quite sufficient. In comparative anatomy, a sound general statement of the formation of

the shoulder-joint, let us say, of the common house cat need not be based on an examination of the skeletons of twenty or thirty million cats. A single specimen might be abnormal—a "freak" or "sport"—and hence misleading. But it is extremely improbable that if pains were taken to secure a dozen cats from different localities and of different parentage, all should be abnormal in the same particular. Provided the formation was the same in all twelve specimens, we should feel that we had ample grounds for generalization. If there were marked variation, however, we should have to continue the examination of specimens until we found one type of clearly predominating structure.

On the other hand, if there is no reasonable assurance that the objects observed are typical, a very large proportion of the total number must be examined. In some cases, indeed, all the individuals in the class must be brought under notice. It will not do to say, on the basis of a knowledge of the place of birth of even a large majority of the three hundred students at Balaklava College, that all the students at Balaklava are North Carolinians. Nothing short of a full tabulation will serve in this instance, for the fact that two hundred ninety-nine of these students were born in North Carolina gives no assurance that the three hundredth student is a native of that state.

Most of our generalizations lie between the extremes illustrated by the preceding examples. Each case must be judged on its own merits, for the possible diversity is too great to be brought within the scope of a formula. Hasty generalization is common. Sometimes it is a fault, sometimes it is not; only circumstances and the uses to which it is put can determine which it is. When Thoreau says that "Even the college-bred and so-called liberally educated men here and elsewhere have really little or no acquaintance with the English classics," he sets us to thinking.

The statement is stimulating and therefore has value. In its place (*Walden*, Chapter III) as part of the record of Thoreau's experience and downright habit of thought, it has added value. It would be pedantic to inquire very closely into the pedigree of such a generalization as this. But suppose this statement of Thoreau's were made the basis for a serious argument supporting some radical change in the methods of college instruction. In that case we should want to know upon what it was grounded. Was he judging by hearsay, or by his own experience? If the latter, what were his opportunities for observation? Did he know a wide circle of the "liberally educated" men of his day and find them lacking in this particular? or was he judging the whole English-speaking world by what he saw in provincial Concord and neighboring villages? Finally, considering the large number of individuals in the class he mentions, would any one man's experience afford sufficient observations for a sound generalization, or should the observations of a number of men in representative centers such as New York, Philadelphia, Boston, London, Oxford, Edinburgh, and Dublin, be consolidated? We should test a generalization as thoroughly as possible whenever an important decision hangs upon it. And we should, of course, be as rigorous in testing our own generalizations as we are in testing those of an opponent.

EXERCISES

1. Illustrate the difference between evidence and assertion or surmise by giving an example of each.

2. Discuss the value of the testimony of each of the following seven witnesses:

(*a*) A business man whose testimony, if accepted, will cause him to lose several thousand dollars.

(*b*) A discharged sea captain testifying in behalf of his former employer.

(*c*) A discharged motorman testifying against the company that discharged him.

(*d*) In a case of forgery, a brother of the accused against a handwriting expert.

(*e*) As to injuries received in a street-car accident, the man who is suing the company, his wife, his doctor (who has been associated with the plaintiff's lawyer in eight similar cases), a doctor regularly employed by the company.

(*f*) In a case of suspected cheating in examination, the accused student, the instructor who makes the charge.

(*g*) In a case of suspected poisoning, the family doctor who issued the death-certificate (assigning the cause of death to heart failure), the chemist who reported finding arsenic in sufficient quantity to cause death.

3. Discuss the value of the newspaper as an authority for facts of contemporary history. What are some of the ultimate sources of the news that the papers print? Do you know personally of any instance in which the actual facts of an occurrence have been suppressed, distorted, or incorrectly stated?

4. What should you say of the competence of the ordinary witness whose name is signed to testimonials in patent-medicine advertisements?

5. Mention an instance in which the circumstantial evidence is more convincing than the testimonial evidence.

6. Show the cumulative force of circumstantial evidence by an example drawn from your own experience or reading.

7. What kinds of reasoning are exemplified in the following extracts?

(*a*) Exclusion of the Japanese by Congressional action will have a very bad effect on American business. Under the "gentlemen's agreement" the Japanese readily accepted the actual fact of exclusion. Outwardly they were treated on a parity with Great Britain, France, Italy, and the other western nations. Their keen national pride was not flouted. But now Congress has advertised the fact of exclusion and the Japanese are deeply wounded in their pride. Being a sensitive and high-spirited people, they are resentful. Naturally, they will not buy American goods if they can possibly help doing so. And American business men must look on helplessly while a lucrative trade passes over into the hands of competitors.

(*b*) But you will not abide the election of a Republican President! In that supposed event, you say, you will destroy the Union; and then, you say, the great crime of having destroyed it will be upon us! That is cool. A highwayman holds a pistol to my ear, and mutters through his teeth, "Stand and deliver, or I shall kill you, and then you will be a murderer!"

To be sure, what the robber demanded of me—my money—was my own; and I had a clear right to keep it; but it was no more my own than my vote is my own; and the threat of death to me, to extort my money, and the threat of destruction to the Union, to extort my vote, can scarcely be distinguished in principle.

(*c*) Suppose that one of you, on coming down in the morning to the parlor of your house, finds that a teapot and some spoons which had been left in the room on the previous evening are gone—the window is open, and you observe the mark of a dirty hand on the window frame, and perhaps, in addition to that, you notice the impress of a hobnailed shoe on the gravel outside. All these phenomena have struck your attention instantly, and before two seconds have passed you say, "Oh, somebody has broken open the window, entered the room, and run off with the teapot and the spoons!"

8. Of the following generalizations, which seem to you inherently probable?—which seem over-hasty?—which would prove easiest to establish as true or false, probable or improbable? How would you determine the truth or falsehood, probability or improbability, of each of them?

(*a*) All United States Senators are rich.

(*b*) In France, mothers and grown-up sons are more intimate friends than in America.

(*c*) Democracies are less efficiently governed than are monarchies.

(*d*) Everybody needs at least eight hours sleep a day.

(*e*) The laboring man has no time to be anything but a machine.

(*f*) The average house is not as well built today as it was a hundred years ago.

(*g*) Rich men's sons never amount to much.

(*h*) Women are more industrious than men.

(*i*) Fish bite most freely on a cloudy day.

V. Refutation

Introductory. In the preceding section we considered ways of making reasonably sure of our facts and avoiding serious blunders in reasoning as we build up the positive side of our argument. But argument does not, as a rule, consist wholly of direct proof. Argument implies an opposition to the view we have taken; as we saw while making an analysis of the question, proofs either have been, or are likely to be, brought forward in support of the contrary opinion. We cannot afford to ignore points which may be made against us, but should make ready to defend our own position and attack opposing arguments wherever they are vulnerable.

What refutation is. Refutation consists in weakening or nullifying the force of opposing arguments. In the case of testimonial evidence this is accomplished by pointing out errors in statements of fact, by showing the prejudice or incompetence of witnesses on the other side, and by citing authorities who disagree with authorities brought forward by opponents. In the case of circumstantial evidence refutation is accomplished by exposing errors in statements of fact and errors in reasoning. If from admitted facts the opposition draws an inference favorable to its side of the question, we try to draw from those same facts an inference favorable to our side. We endeavor to match point against point as far as possible. The following is an example of refutation:

Your request for eighty dollars I do not think it best to comply with now. At the various times when I have helped you a little you have said to me, "We can get along very well now"; but in a very short time I find you in the same difficulty again. Now, this can only happen by some defect in your conduct. What that defect is, I think I know. You are not lazy, and still you are an idler. I doubt whether, since I saw you, you have done a good whole

day's work in any one day. You do not very much dislike to work, and still you do not work much, merely because it does not seem to you that you could get much for it. This habit of uselessly wasting time is the whole difficulty; it is vastly important to you, and still more so to your children, that you should break the habit. It is more important to them, because they have longer to live, and can keep out of an idle habit before they are in it, easier than they can get out after they are in.

You are now in need of some money; and what I propose is that you shall go to work, "tooth and nail," for somebody who will give you money for it. Let father and your boys take charge of your things at home, prepare for a crop, and make the crop, and you go to work for the best money wages, or in discharge of any debt you owe, that you can get; and, to secure you a fair reward for your labor, I now promise you, that for every dollar you will, between this and the first of May, get for your own labor, either in money or as your own indebtedness, I will then give you one other dollar. By this, if you hire yourself at ten dollars a month, from me you will get ten more, making twenty dollars a month for your work. In this I do not mean you shall go off to St. Louis, or the lead-mines, or the gold-mines in California, but I mean for you to go at it for the best wages you can get close to home in Coles County. Now, if you will do this, you will be soon out of debt, and what is better, you will have a habit that will keep you from getting in debt again. But, if I should now clear you out of debt, next year you would be just as deep in as ever.

You say you would almost give your place in heaven for seventy or eighty dollars. Then you value your place in heaven very cheap, for I am sure you can, with the offer I make, get the seventy or eighty dollars for four or five months' work. You say if I will furnish you the money you will deed me the land, and, if you don't pay the money back, you will deliver possession. Nonsense! If you can't now live with the land, how will you then live without it?[1]

An instance of refutation as it appears in a complete argument along with direct proof will be found in Webster's "Letter on Impressment," reprinted in the Appendix (page 621).

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[1]Abraham Lincoln, letter to John D. Johnston.

The value of refutation. In most arguments refutation is only a little less important than positive proof. A well-rounded argument usually is made up of both. In one class of arguments, however, refutation alone is ordinarily sufficient to carry conviction. In defending a man or an institution against definite charges the case is won if the charges are clearly shown to be false. The burden of proof rests on the accuser. If he fails to make good his charges, he loses his case. The burden of proof likewise rests on the man who advances a proposition that would upset a well-established method of doing things or a generally accepted opinion. The more radical his proposition, the more can reliance be placed on refutation in arguing against it. But rarely would refutation alone be sufficiently convincing as a defense of established views or institutions. They are seldom worth defending if they have nothing but age or custom to recommend them. When the burden of proof is not obviously and strongly on one side or the other—and this is the case in the majority of arguments—refutation is merely an auxiliary force, useful in weakening opposing views and in defending one's own.

Two common types of fallacy. In the preceding section we considered some of the commoner fallacies; e.g., errors in reasoning from cause to effect and from effect to cause, false analogy, and hasty generalization. In addition to these there are two broad types of fallacious argument that appear so frequently that it will be worth our while to single them out here from all the other possible varieties of loose and erratic thinking.[1] We should be on guard against them in our own argument and should be prepared to refute them when they appear in the argument of an opponent.

[1]Logicians have described and classified many kinds of fallacy. No attempt is made in this book to deal with more than a few kinds. A discussion of such fallacies as *undistributed middle* and *false conversion* would only be confusing to one who did not understand the syllogism, the relations of opposition, etc.

1. *Ignoring the question.* To avoid meeting the real point and issue of a question, whether through conscious or unwitting evasion, is to commit the fallacy of ignoring the question. This fallacy is commonly due to failure to grasp the bearings of an argument or to the desire to distract attention from its weak points by throwing dust in the eyes of an audience. The following classification includes the more usual forms of the fallacy:

(*a*) The introduction of personalities not pertinent to the question is easily detected but is often surprisingly effective with the unthinking. Attention is turned away from the argument itself to the person who advances it, which is a very different thing from impugning the testimony of a witness; for reasoning may be good or bad quite independently of its advocates.

Again, if an argument is directed against a person, as in a criminal trial, the defense may seek to divert the jury's attention from damaging evidence by displaying the virtues of the accused. John X is charged with having sold his vote, and it is replied that he is kind to his widowed mother.

(*b*) Similar in effect to the foregoing is the substitution of ridicule, prejudice, and passion for reason. When the political "spell-binder" seeks to defend a city administration charged with inefficiency, extravagance, or corruption by pointing to the glorious services rendered to state and nation by the party to which the city officers belong, he tries to becloud or get away from the real issue. Many a political argument simmers down to "Vote for X because Lincoln was a Republican"; or "Vote for Z because Jefferson was a Democrat." X is an incompetent street-commissioner, but he hopes to swing back into office on the ground that his election will be an endorsement of the governor of the state or a manifestation of confidence in the president of the republic. This type of fallacy flourishes

when popular feeling runs high. Not long ago an argument attempting to show that a knowledge of German was valuable to the scientist and the scholar was quite as likely to be met with denunciation as with reason. An argument trying to show that the Irish had as good a right to self-determination as the Poles was crushed by calling the author a pro-German. More recently it has been common to call a man who proposes some reform of economic or political conditions a Bolshevist and instead of answering his arguments fairly and squarely to run off on a tirade against the horrors of revolution.[1]

(*c*) Shifting ground, another form of ignoring the question, consists in altering the question as the argument proceeds. Feeling himself driven into a corner and liable to defeat, a man may change his interpretations of the question until it is no longer the same proposition with which he began. This is always possible when any ambiguous term of the proposition has been left undefined. Or the ground may be shifted by introducing issues that tend to confuse or cover up the real question. To argue in favor of the virtue of temperance when the question is prohibition *versus* high license is to ignore the essential question as to which method better promotes temperance. In the following quotation Gideon Welles accuses Seward of shifting ground in connection with the legality of opening British mail captured from the steamer *Peterhoff* during the Civil War:

> The President, he [Sumner] says, is horrified, or appeared to be, with the idea of a war with England, which he assumed depended on this question. He was confident we should have war with England if we presumed to open their mail-bags, or break their seals or locks. They would not submit to it, and we were in no condition to plunge into a foreign war on a subject of so little

[1]This fallacy is close kin to the fallacy that you successfully controvert a man's opinions by putting him in jail.

importance in comparison with the terrible consequences which must follow our act. Of this idea of a war with England, Sumner could not dispossess him by argument, or by showing its absurdity. Whether it was real or affected ignorance Sumner was not satisfied.

I have no doubts of the President's sincerity, and so told Sumner. But he has been imposed upon by a man in whom he confides. His confidence has been abused. He does not comprehend the principles involved nor the question itself. Seward does not intend that he shall comprehend it. While attempting to look into it, the Secretary of State is daily, and almost hourly, wailing in his ears the calamities of a war with England, which he is striving to prevent. The President is thus led away from the real question, and will probably decide it, not on its merits, but on this false issue, raised by the man who is the author of the difficulty.[1]

2. *Begging the question.* The fallacy of begging the question involves the assumption, as true or false, of a point that requires proof. It is a form of assertion, but is often so covered up or apparently logical that it escapes detection except by those who are on their guard against it.

(*a*) In its most comprehensive form it consists in assuming the truth of a proposition that includes, or is equivalent to, the conclusion to be proved. In arguing to justify Austria's ultimatum to Serbia, a vehement apologist speaks of Serbia as "that kingdom of criminals," which assumes the main point at issue. In the following quotation the writer begs the question twice in the last sentence:

I submit, sir, that these paragraphs from my book show conclusively that the paragraph quoted from your review, pretending to summarize my argument, is a piece of misrepresentation. Perhaps you will be good enough—fair enough—to print this letter for the benefit of those of your readers who may have refrained from surrendering their love of truthfulness and honorable criticism to the evil passion of Bolshevism. Perhaps you will find it possible, also, to explain why pro-Bolshevist journals are so uniformly addicted to this practice of misrepresentation and deceit.

[1] *The Diary of Gideon Welles*, April 28, 1863. *Atlantic Monthly*, May, 1909.

He assumes that the paper whose editor he is addressing is pro-Bolshevist and is "addicted" to falsifying. That is, he begs the question by assuming as true statements that are neither proved nor admitted.

(*b*) The fallacy of arguing in a circle lies in making two statements or propositions prove each other in turn. A and B are two propositions, each requiring proof: we prove A by bringing forward B; and then, since we have proved A, we use it triumphantly to prove B. This may seem too obvious a fallacy to deceive anybody, but mask it in a confusing mass of words and it may convince many. A certain learned critic, for example, assumes that a representative poet of democracy will have such-and-such characteristics; he then shows that Walt Whitman is a representative poet because he possesses these characteristics; and finally has no difficulty in showing, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that since Whitman, the great representative of poets of democracy, has certain characteristics, the assumption made in the beginning must be a true picture of the poet of democracy. It takes this argument some twenty-five pages to work around the circle to the point from which it started. The parts of such an argument may be made to hang together beautifully, and its very coherence becomes a deceptive element to blind the audience to the fact that it has, as a whole, nothing to hang to.

EXERCISES

1. What fallacy does Macaulay ridicule in the following quotation?

> The advocates of Charles . . . content themselves with calling testimony to character. He had so many private virtues! And had James the Second no private virtues? Was Oliver Cromwell, his bitterest enemies themselves being judges, destitute of private virtues? And what, after all, are the virtues

ascribed to Charles? A religious zeal, not more sincere than that of his son, and fully as weak and narrow-minded, and a few of the ordinary household decencies which half the tombstones in England claim for those who lie beneath them. A good father! A good husband! Ample apologies indeed for fifteen years of persecution, tyranny, and falsehood!

We charge him with having broken his coronation oath; and we are told that he kept his marriage vow! We accuse him of having given up his people to the merciless inflictions of the most hot-headed and hard-hearted of prelates; and the defense is, that he took his little son on his knee and kissed him! We censure him for having violated the articles of the Petition of Right, after having, for good and valuable consideration, promised to observe them; and we are informed that he was accustomed to hear prayers at six o'clock in the morning! It is to such considerations as these, together with his Vandyke dress, his handsome face, and his peaked beard, that he owes, we verily believe, most of his popularity with the present generation.

2. What fallacy is exposed by Felix Adler in the following?

There is an argument in favor of child-labor so un-American and so inhuman that I am almost ashamed to quote it, and yet it has been used, and I fear it is secretly in the minds of some who would not openly stand for it. A manufacturer standing near the furnace of a glasshouse and pointing to a procession of young Slav boys who were carrying the glass on trays, remarked, "Look at their faces, and you will see that it is idle to take them from the glasshouse in order to give them an education; they are what they are, and will always remain what they are." He meant that there are some human beings—and these Slavs of the number—who are mentally irredeemable, so fast asleep intellectually that they cannot be awakened; designed by nature, therefore, to be hewers of wood and drawers of water. This cruel and wicked thing was said of Slavs; it is the same thing which has been said from time immemorial by the slave-owners of their slaves. First they degrade human beings by denying them the opportunity to develop their better nature: no schools, no teaching, no freedom, no outlook; and then, as if in mockery, they point to the degraded condition of their victims as a reason why they should never be allowed to escape from it.

3. Refute the following arguments:

(*a*) This year's senior class has the highest average academic standing of any class in college. Henry Forsyth is at the head of this class in scholarship. Accordingly, it may safely be taken for granted that he is the best scholar in college.

(*b*) Have you a dizzy feeling in the morning, with pains in your back? John Doe suffered this way for three years, and spent a small fortune in doctors' bills. Finally he took two bottles of Kill-or-Kure and is now a well man again. If Kill-or-Kure cured him, of course it can cure you. Buy a bottle today!

(*c*) I'm sure he must have seen service in France, for he has a German helmet hanging up in his study.

(*d*) Depend upon it, his word is absolutely reliable. I have never known him to lie.

(*e*) This is the picture of a man who seized his opportunity. He used to work in a printing office for fourteen dollars a week, and would probably be there still if he had not seen an advertisement of the Rosy Prospect Correspondence School. After completing our course in Civil Engineering, he had no difficulty in securing a position at forty-five dollars a week. What he has done, you can do.

(*f*) Of course he will do you a favor! He must be kind-hearted and generous, for his wife is devoted to him.

(*g*) This must be an accurate watch, for it comes from one of the best makers.

(*h*) John Doe is a much abler man than Richard Roe, and therefore is certain to be elected governor.

(*i*) If the exhibition of criminals, publicly executed, tends to heighten in others the dread of undergoing the same fate, it may be expected that those soldiers who have seen the most service should have the most dread of death in battle; but the reverse of this is the case; therefore, the former is not to be believed.

(*j*) He must be an Italian, for all Italians have black hair and dark complexions.

(*k*) He certainly is a cotton-grower, for he is a farmer and he lives in Georgia.

VI. Persuasion

The purely intellectual argument. Arguments fall into two classes between which there is this obvious distinction: that the one seeks to influence thought alone; the other, to influence thought and produce action. An argument which goes to show that birds were evolved from reptiles belongs to the first class. It calls for no action. Effectiveness in this kind is largely the same as effectiveness in exposition; clearness is the moving force. Other things, such as knowledge of the subject, being equal, he will best succeed who has that "power of lucid exposition which is the most formidable of all arguments."[1] The ideal to strive for is the clearest possible presentation of the essential facts and the sound arguments based upon them.

Appeal to emotion. The other type of argument, which seeks to win something more than passive assent, has to take into consideration that complexity known as human nature. It must be persuasive as well as convincing, for an appeal to the emotions is a prime factor in determining action. In war times fife and drum will bring at least as many recruits to the colors as will cool logic. No self-respecting man of intelligence will wish to put himself on a level with demagogues and charlatans by trading upon the worst weaknesses of human nature, but it frequently happens that he cannot afford to overlook them. If he makes capital out of them, he will "sink i' the scale"; but if he regards them as obstacles to be met and thrust aside to make room for better spurs to action, his self-respect will not suffer. Let us therefore keep in mind the distinction between the wrong kind of persuasion and the right kind. The one appeals to prejudice and bigotry, sordid passions, malice, envy, and hatred. It includes

[1] H. W. Paul, *Matthew Arnold*, chap. xii.

trickery, from the harmless sham of the office-seeker who goes about kissing babies to the base deception of a Richard III as we see it in Act III, Scene vii of Shakespeare's tragedy, where Richard puts on the mask of piety. The other appeals to the feeling for right and justice, love of fair play, regard for truth, and sympathy for the downtrodden; and is free from cant, sham, and chicane.

Persuasiveness not learned from textbooks. The ability to distinguish between the right and wrong kinds of persuasion and to blend with logic just the honest yet moving proportion of emotional appeal cannot be taught here; a textbook is not the place to learn persuasiveness. In his essay on *Society and Solitude* Emerson says, "When a young barrister said to the late Mr. Mason, 'I keep my chamber to read law'—'Read law!' replied the veteran, ' 'tis in the courtroom you must read law.' " It is chiefly through knowledge of oneself and of others that persuasion is mastered. Yet a beginning may be made here.

Persuasive order. Persuasion depends partly on climax. An argument should gather momentum as it proceeds and should end with that part which is most likely to leave an audience in a mood for action. The arrangement may sometimes need to be shaped, also, in accordance with what we may call the order of tactfulness, so that it will move along the line of least resistance, be wedge-shaped and split cleanly rather than bruise and batter. The man who would persuade people to adopt a line of action or a policy to which they are naturally hostile must approach his argument tactfully. Is there any common ground, pertinent to his subject, between him and his audience? If so, that is the thin end of his wedge. From common ground he may be able to lead his audience by considerate gradations to a conclusion they would have utterly rejected had

it been bluntly thrust at them. When prejudice exists against one's views, that prejudice must be removed before one's arguments can obtain a favorable hearing. To go at this prejudice hammer and tongs may exhilarate a writer with the joy of battle, but it may also enliven his audience in the same way, rousing them to strenuous opposition instead of to open-mindedness and then coöperation. If you wish to show a man that he is mistaken, it is poor policy to begin by calling him a fool. The tactful order, then, will lead the writer to establish relations of understanding and mutual agreement at the start and to proceed to his more radical or most warmly opposed points by degrees.

Concreteness. Vividness and concreteness also make for persuasion. Few men are touched by the abstract and general; enthusiasm, sympathy, active feelings generally, are awakened by specific cases set forth in specific words. Try to bring the actual, concrete thing into your argument when you wish your audience to act. General arguments in favor of the abolition of capital punishment may have convinced many citizens of Rhode Island of the undesirability of capital punishment, but no action followed; only when a specific case confronted them in the shape of an innocent man hanged by due process of law, were they roused to action. You may win a man's approval by an abstract discussion of the evils of the drug habit, but if you wish to get his vote for stricter regulation of the drug traffic, you are likeliest to get it by showing him vividly the ugly, concrete reality.

EXERCISES

1. Why do public speakers frequently begin their arguments with complimentary remarks, or a humorous story or anecdote?

2. As an example of tact in the face of strong opposition, read Henry Ward Beecher's speech to the cotton operatives of Liverpool.

3. Bring to class for comparison and discussion notes that you have made on the persuasive methods of some successful public speaker.

4. What means of persuasion might be effective in the following cases?

(*a*) Subject: In time of war, wealth should be conscripted. Audience: i. the rich; ii. the poor.

(*b*) Subject: Advocacy of more restraints on freedom of speech. Audience: i. conservatives; ii. radicals.

5. Write a persuasive letter either to a former schoolmate urging him to enter your college, or to a classmate urging him to join a certain club or fraternity.

GENERAL EXERCISES IN ARGUMENT

1. Choose an argumentative question that interests you. Frame the proposition fairly, so that something may be said on either side. Analyze it and draw up a careful brief. In arranging the order of the main points it will be well to consider your audience as well as the relative importance of the points themselves. Remember that climax is important and that nine times out of ten your strongest point should come last. Criticize your brief unsparingly. Is the evidence sufficient at all points? Is the reasoning sound? Have you wasted space on any hair-splitting or trivial argument?

On the basis of this brief, write out your argument. Try to make the course of your thought perfectly clear, and at the same time avoid a mechanical following of the brief. Remember that your argument must be made as attractive as possible, and that attractiveness involves no sacrifice of essential force or reasoning. And keep your audience always in mind.

2. Criticize the two following arguments:

Immigration

It is only too true that our naturalization laws are far from what they should be. The United States has been accustomed to bestow American citizenship on practically anyone, without having sufficient regard for the physical, mental, or moral condition of the applicant. Yet despite this fact, I

maintain that the trouble with the United States today arises from our immigration laws. They have been entirely too loose. If more attention is given to the latter laws, less need be given to the former. We have admitted foreigners under very slight investigation into their past careers and present state. It is true that we have room for more people, but would it not be better to devote all attention to the present population than to invite countless numbers of useless immigrants from other lands? It is evident that the greater the population, the less the amount of care that can be given to each individual person. Were it not better to uplift the Americans in every possible way than to weaken conditions by allowing a great number of foreigners to immigrate? We are far from perfect. In education especially are we lacking. There are thousands of people in the United States at the present time who need literary training. The moral and physical conditions can also be improved. It is a good thing to care for those who are not protected elsewhere, but it is a better thing to care for Americans first. Therefore, I would advocate stringent, very stringent immigration laws.

The Value of Dead Languages

"Oh, I hate Latin. It is no good anyway. I never can make any use of it, and nobody ever can converse in Latin."

Over and over again these dreadful statements have been made by high- and normal-school pupils. Now the main reason for these useless remarks seems to be ignorance of both the language itself and its real value.

It is certainly the duty of every language teacher to try to impress her pupils with the importance and value of the language, as well as the rules and translations.

No pupils can work ambitiously upon a language they do not realize either progress from or the uses of.

No high-school student ought to expect to be able to converse in the ancient languages. Comparatively few college students can do this. The accomplishment is confined principally to the professors and teachers of the languages.

Latin and Greek are certainly grand old languages, and it is only after persistent and faithful study, continued for years, that the real value of these languages can be fully realized and the reward for study seem great.

If a student never progresses further than the high-school course permits of these languages, whatever vocation he pursues they will be of some benefit to him.

Many of the words in the English language are of Latin origin, and the ability to translate them readily (after determining from which ancient words they are derived) is often of much consequence. Besides, many of the great authors use Latin phrases, and both monuments and tombstones (in America as well as the Old World) are sometimes inscribed in Latin.

The English language differs from other European languages, because it is based upon so many different ones.

The fact that Caesar invaded Britain, in 55 B. C., accounts for such a large proportion of Latin words in the English language.

"Latin, Greek and Hebrew are so ancient nobody could ever speak them," said a normal-school graduate. Surely she didn't suppose the ancients used them for records and inscriptions, and conversed in French or German.

The reason so few people can speak the language is because they do not spend money, energy, and study enough to acquire it.

"What earthly good are Greek and Hebrew?" asked a grammar-school teacher (who had laboriously dragged through four years of Latin in her school days).

The scholars of old, well versed in these languages, have produced for us Latin and English translations of the Bible. All historical records in the Holy Land were derived from ancient tongues. Hebrew is the source of most of these.

Roman and Greek history (in English) are translations of the dead languages.

God's commandments were translated from Hebrew.

What greater proof of the truth of the Bible can one wish for than to laboriously translate chapters of the Old and New Testaments from ancient Greek?

All true ministers believe the Bible, and they are usually familiar with the dead languages.

Let us hope that the day will come, as in years agone, when students will better realize the value of these glorious old languages and not discontinue them after the first year or two in high school, because they are no good.

CHAPTER V

DESCRIPTION

I. The Nature of Description

Material and aim. Description has for its province the "world of eye and ear" and the reaction of that world upon man. Its subject-matter includes all objects that can give rise to sensations of any kind, and also everything denoted by such terms as "state of mind" or "state of feeling." That is to say, anything that may be seen, touched, tasted, smelled, or heard may be described, as may those workings of consciousness which one is said to feel—a frame of mind, a mood, a prevailing sensation of pleasure, well-being, pain, anger, and so on. Images formed by the imagination are likewise subjects for description; Matthew Arnold's vision, for example, of the haunts of the merman—

> Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
> Where the winds are all asleep;
> Where the spent lights quiver and gleam;
> Where the salt weed sways in the stream;
> Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
> Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground;
> Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
> Dry their mail and bask in the brine—

is just as fit material for description as the most commonplace of actualities. Such being the subject-matter, the proper aim of description is to call up in the mind of the reader images corresponding more or less exactly to those in the mind of the writer. Ideally speaking, description should enable a reader to experience imaginatively sensa-

tions and impressions and emotions that the writer has experienced or imagined. To a sympathetic reader a masterly description is really equivalent to so much vicarious experience of the sights and sounds of this world.

The value of description. To understand how important a part description plays in enlarging and enriching the background of our consciousness, we need only try to think what our mental life would be like if it were divested of all that description has contributed to it. Those of us who have followed the sea with Dana and Bullen and Conrad, who have caught glimpses of India from Kipling, of Japan from Lafcadio Hearn, of the South Sea islands from Stevenson, of France from Henry James, of Spain from Washington Irving and John Hay, of California in the mining days from Bret Harte, of the Mississippi from Mark Twain, of old Salem from Hawthorne, of New England woods and fields from Thoreau, would feel poorer if the memories of these things did not mingle with the memories of things we have actually seen. Lowell, in *My Garden Acquaintance*, bears testimony to the power of description:

> I do not know whether his [Gilbert White's] descriptions of scenery are good or not, but they have made me familiar with his neighborhood. Since I first read him, I have walked over some of his favorite haunts, but I still see them through his eyes rather than by any recollection of actual and personal vision.

Hawthorne's explanation of a similar effect is expressed with such delicate precision that it deserves quotation in full:

> Almost always, in visiting such scenes as I have been attempting to describe, I had a singular sense of having been there before. The ivy-grown English churches (even that of Bebbington, the first that I beheld) were quite as familiar to me, when fresh from home, as the old wooden meeting-house in Salem, which used, on wintry Sabbaths, to be the frozen purgatory of my childhood.

This was a bewildering, yet very delightful, emotion fluttering about me like a faint summer wind, and filling my imagination with a thousand half-remembrances, which looked as vivid as sunshine at a side glance, but faded quite away whenever I attempted to grasp and define them. Of course the explanation of the mystery was, that history, poetry, and fiction, books of travel, and the talk of tourists had given me pretty accurate preconceptions of the common objects of English scenery, and these, being long ago vivified by a youthful fancy, had insensibly taken their places among the images of things actually seen. Yet the illusion was often so powerful that I almost doubted whether such airy remembrances might not be a sort of innate idea, the print of a recollection in some ancestral mind, transmitted, with fainter and fainter impress through several descents, to my own. I felt, indeed, like the stalwart progenitor in person, returning to the hereditary haunts after more than two hundred years, and finding the church, the hall, the farmhouse, the cottage, hardly changed during his long absence—the same shady by-paths and hedge-lanes, the same veiled sky, and green luster of the lawns and fields—while his own affinities for these things, a little obscured by disuse, were reviving at every step.[1]

Limitations of description. From the point of view of the writer, then, description is the art of helping others to share the harvest of his eyes and ears and other senses. That is its ideal goal. This goal cannot be fully attained because of the refractory nature of the stuff the descriptive writer works in, but it can be approximated. To achieve whatever of success is possible in description, it is helpful to understand its more important limitations, and these we shall now consider.

(1) *Description symbolic, not presentive.* There is much loose talk about "word pictures" and "word painting," "vignettes in rime," and "pastels in prose." Such expressions are suggestive when understood for what they are—as figurative, like the term "color" applied to music, or the term "wooden" applied to writing—but they are mislead-

[1] *Our Old Home.*

ing if they carry us on to an extended comparison of description and painting. The analogy does not hold good, for description is a symbolic, not a presentive, art. Drawing and painting are presentive: that is, through the medium of line or color they represent objects. The painter of portraits, for instance, seeks to put his colors on canvas in such a way that they will give a representation of the person he is painting; he seeks to create an illusion of resemblance between the subject of his picture and the picture itself. But between the subject of a description and the description itself there cannot exist the slightest illusion of resemblance in form or color. The description of a man will in no respect be like the man in the sense that his portrait may be like him, for words are symbols standing for objects but not resembling them.[1] The comparison of these two distinct arts is bound to result unfortunately if it leads the writer to attempt "painting in words," or to deal almost exclusively with visual sensations.

He cannot, as a rule, hope to rival the painter in lavish ness of detail. If the attempt is made, there is danger of the description's becoming blurred, or unduly hard to follow, or (worst of all if the aim be to give pleasure) tedious. After reading the following portion of a "word painting" of a fashionable young American of 1855, we shall perhaps be better able to see wherein the danger lies:

The curtains parted and there appeared before the delighted Elise a young lady costumed in the height of the mode, a dainty creature who might have inspired admiring comment even in Saratoga at the height of the season and who would be sure to be the cynosure of all eyes in simple Brentwood. Elise's eyes feasted on gown and bonnet.

The skirt was of apple green *moire antique,* contracting ravishingly with a black velvet basquine trimmed with narrow silver

[1]Exception must be made of onomatopoetic words like *buzz* and *chirp.*

galloon which was edged with Valenciennes. The basquine, opened slightly in front to expose a fine muslin chemisette embroidered with pink forget-me-nots and with lace insertions, fitted the dainty lady snugly, and was confined at the waist by three silver loops passed over mother-of-pearl buttons. As braces, four rows of galloons about an inch apart were sewed flat to the velvet; at the waist these were parallel, but above and below they diverged in a fan shape, the upper portions being turned to follow the line of the neck. In the middle of the lappet, and just a little below the natural waist, were five small mother-of-pearl buttons a half-inch or so apart, from each of which dropped a galloon, the middle one falling straight, those on either side diverging toward the bottom. On both sides of the lappet was the same effective ornamentation. The sleeves, half wide at the top, full width at the bottom, were left open from the bend of the arm to the bottom. On each side of these openings were three groups of five ornaments like those on the lappets; and the outsides of the sleeves, and of the basquine as well, were edged with a handsome black lace above an inch in width.

Her bonnet was of white turq velvet trimmed with moss-rosebuds, white blonde, and black velvet. The front of the bonnet came forward in a point on the forehead, rounding off behind at the sides. The tube-like crown was very sloping, and at the top was small, flat, low down, and square at the edges. In the front were eight conical slashes out of which peeped rosebuds inclosed between two rows of blonde. These slashes were prettily edged with piping. A cross-band of black velvet lay on her hair and was trimmed on the right side with a group of rosebuds. Roses and blondes decorated the inside of the bonnet.[1]

This description by no means mentions all the particulars of costume that would be represented in a full-length por-

[1]As a welcome relief after this inventory, Mark Twain's burlesque is here quoted:

Her gown was of a simple magenta tulle, cut bias, traversed by three rows of light-blue flounces, with the selvage edges turned up with ashes-of-roses chenille; overdress of dark bay tarlatan with scarlet satin lambrequins; corn-colored polonaise, *en panier*, looped with mother-of-pearl buttons and silver cord, and hauled aft and made fast by buff-velvet lashings; basque of lavender reps, picked out with valenciennes; low neck, short sleeves; maroon-velvet necktie edged with delicate pink silk; inside handkerchief of some simple three-ply ingrain fabric of a soft saffron tint; coral bracelets and locket-chain; coiffure of forget-me-nots and lilies-of-the-valley massed around a noble calla.

This was all; yet even in this subdued attire she was divinely beautiful.

—*The Loves of Alonzo Fitz Clarence.*

trait by a painter of the Dutch school, but it goes into detail sufficiently to tax the attention of many readers. If the young lady's skirt, shoes, parasol, rings, bracelets, locket, and other belongings were described as elaborately as her basquine and bonnet, it is safe to say that the description would grow utterly tedious to all but a few specialists in costume. "To attempt to gain a view of her—or indeed of any fascinating woman—from a measured category, is as difficult as to appreciate the effect of a landscape by exploring it at night with a lantern—or of a full chord of music by piping the notes in succession."[1] In a description the details stand in a row, end to end; whereas in a painting they seem to stand in their actual relationship, which is firmly established in the mind of a beholder by a glance or two. George Meredith's comment is pertinent:

> Set descriptions are good for puppets. Living men and women are too various in the mixture fashioning them . . . to be livingly rendered in a formal sketch. I may tell you his eyes are pale blue, his features regular, his hair silky, brownish, his legs long, his head rather stooping (only the head), his mouth commonly closed; these are the facts, and you have seen much the same in a nursery doll. Such literary craft is of the nursery. So with landscapes. The art of the pen . . . is to rouse the inward vision, instead of laboring with a drop-scene brush, as if it were to the eye; because our flying minds cannot contain a protracted description. That is why the poets, who spring imagination with a word or a phrase, paint lasting pictures. The Shakespearian, the Dantesque, are in a line, two at most.[2]

(2) *Dependence on the reader's memory and imagination.* We have seen that description cannot, as a rule, successfully compete with painting in lavishness of detail. It is still further limited by the fact that its effects are so dependent upon the reader's memory and imagination that in many

[1] Hardy, *Desperate Remedies.*
[2] *Diana of the Crossways.*

cases there can be only a distant resemblance between the images in the minds of writer and reader. Let us look at a typical passage in order to see wherein our memory and imagination are involved:

> He found his room all filled with fragrant freshness: the windows had stood open the whole day. In the garden just opposite his windows the nightingale was trilling its soft, melodious lay; there was a warm, dull glow in the night sky above the rounded tree-tops; it was the moon making ready to float upward. Nezhdanov lighted a candle; the gray night-moths flew in from the garden in showers, and went toward the light, while the wind blew them back and set the candle's bluish-yellow flame flickering.[1]

Suppose that the image evoked by this is as a whole new to us; that we remember nothing else quite like it. How about the separate elements of which it is composed?—the garden fragrance, the bird's song, the dull glow in the sky, the moths, the flickering candle? Is not our realization of these due to memory of our own perceptions? If so, unless our experiences have been the same, it is not likely that the remembered perceptions in the minds of each of us will be more than approximately like those in the mind of Turgenieff. We have all, say, seen the "dull glow in the sky above the rounded treetops"; but if we have not seen it under precisely the conditions (height from the ground, distance and number and character of the trees, state of the atmosphere, and so forth) which Turgenieff had in mind, it is idle to think that our vision of it will correspond at all points exactly with his. Suppose, also, that we have never heard the song of the nightingale, but that it has poetic associations for us because we have read Keats or Coleridge or Milton or Shelley. We may imagine a "soft, melodious" bird-song which harmonizes with the other elements of the complete image, but there is small likeli-

[1]Turgenieff, *Virgin Soil*.

hood that we shall hit upon precisely the notes of the nightingale.[1]

The importance of suggestion. We shall do wisely, then, not to dwell at great length on all the small details of a subject as though we were writing descriptive exposition. Instead of laboriously heaping up particulars we should strive, through the suggestive power of words, to arouse and stimulate the reader's imagination to create from his awakened memories fresh images of his own, vivid and personal. In suggestion lies the main force of descriptive writing; through suggestion are achieved its finest effects. There is more stimulus for the imagination in Macbeth's

> O full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife

than in several pages of minutiae. We feel the force of suggestion in his brief description of approaching night:

> Light thickens; and the crow
> Makes wing to the rooky wood:
> Good things of day begin to droop and drowse;
> Whiles night's black agents to their preys do rouse.

Mark Pattison gives us enlightening comment when he says of Milton's

> Arched walks of twilight groves,
> And shadows brown that Sylvan loves
> Of pine, or monumental oak,

[1] In Miss Lillian D. Wald's "House on Henry Street" (*Atlantic*, April, 1915) there is a passage which shows how wide may be the difference between the image in the mind of the reader and that in the mind of the writer. The back yard of a settlement-house in New York had been turned into a recreation place. It was surrounded by a border of flowers, was partly covered by a trellis on which grew wistaria, contained two ailanthus trees ("highly cherished by those who otherwise would have lived a treeless life"), a sand-pile, swings, etc. When a young printer, whose experience was only of the city, saw this recreation ground he said enthusiastically, "This must be like the scenes of country life in English novels!"

"can any single word be found equal to 'monumental' in its power of suggesting to the imagination the historic oak of park or chase, up to the knees in fern, which has outlasted ten generations of men; has been the mute witness of the scenes of love, treachery, or violence enacted in the baronial hall which it shadows and protects; and has been so associated with man that it is now rather a column and memorial obelisk than a tree of the forest."

The importance of suggestion cannot be too much emphasized. It is vital to success in description. What description is like without suggestion, and what description is like with suggestion, must be felt by the writer if he would make headway in this art, if he would rise above the "nursery" stage of making a mere list of facts about his subject. To realize the difference, he must read. A few hints for profitable reading, indicative of range and variety rather than of amount, are here given: (1) Among prose works, Thomas Hardy's *Far From the Madding Crowd* and *The Return of the Native*, Conrad's *Typhoon*, Kipling's *Kim* and *Jungle Books*, Stevenson's *Travels with a Donkey* and *The Ebb Tide*, Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, Henry James's *A Little Tour in France*, Aldrich's *Ponkapog to Pesth*, Walt Whitman's *Specimen Days*, Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss*, Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and *Twice Told Tales*, Meredith's *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel*, Curtis's *Prue and I*, Tomlinson's *The Sea and the Jungle*. (2) Among poems, Keats's *Ode to a Nightingale* and *The Eve of St. Agnes*, Arnold's *The Scholar Gipsy* and *The Forsaken Merman*, Tennyson's *The Lady of Shalott* and *The Lotos-Eaters*, Browning's *Saul*, Masefield's *The Story of a Round-House*, Palmer's translation of *The Odyssey*, Norton's translation of *The Divine Comedy*. And let the student read Milton and Shakespeare constantly if he wishes to learn the power of English words used descriptively.

EXERCISES

1. What are the limitations of description?

2. Why is it practically impossible to "convey our impressions" exactly in words?

3. In what does the true power of description lie?

4. Bring to class for discussion a short passage (taken preferably from one of your favorite novels or stories) which clearly exhibits descriptive power.

5. Can you recall any lines from Shakespeare that have especial descriptive force?

6. From one of the following poems select a few lines that seem especially suggestive: Milton's *L'Allegro*, Keats's *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, Whittier's *Snow-Bound*, Masefield's *The Story of a Round-House*.

7. Find a description which you think could be decidedly improved by condensation. What details would you omit?

8. Describe in one or two sentences the costume described on page 233.

9. Describe in a single sentence Fancy Day (page 245).

II. The Means of Description

The means of description are (1) enumeration, (2) comparison, and (3) suggestion of effect.

(1) *Enumeration*

The guiding principles of enumeration. Enumeration, the statement of the details that suggest the subject as a whole, is the backbone of description, the means most widely useful and most commonly employed. In many a description, as in the following, it is the only means used.

I am writing this, nearly sundown, watching a cavalry company (acting Signal Service), just come in through a shower, making their night's camp ready on some broad, vacant ground. There are the men in their yellow-striped jackets. All are dismounted; the freed

horses stand with drooping heads and wet sides; they are to be led off presently, to water. The little wall-tents and shelter-tents spring up quickly. I see the fires already blazing, and pots and kettles over them. Some among the men are driving in tent-poles, wielding their axes with strong, slow blows. I see great huddles of horses, bundles of hay, groups of men (some with unbuckled sabers yet on their sides), a few officers, piles of wood, the flames of the fires, saddles, harness, etc. The smoke streams upward, additional men arrive and dismount—some drive in stakes and tie their horses to them; some go with buckets for water, some are chopping wood, and so on.[1]

This is manifestly rough and ready writing, a page from a diary kept in war-time, but it manages to give us an excellent picture of a cavalry company making camp. Its simplicity is worth noting: there are few adjectives and few adverbs. The effectiveness of the passage depends very largely upon its concrete detail and upon the clear-cut images suggested through the use of specific words. Here, as in most good description, concreteness and specificness are guides to success. They are not the only guides, as we shall see in Sections III and IV of this chapter; and by themselves they might lead us to descriptive writing of the overloaded kind illustrated on page 233. Nevertheless, the first step in learning to write satisfactory descriptions is to aim at being concrete and specific.

The specific word. It is the specific word that calls up the definite mental image, that "springs imagination." Our senses and feelings are not willingly responsive to generalizations. As a general rule it is not vegetation that blocks a man's passage through the underbrush, but bull brier or Virginia creeper or wild grape; not flowerage that a woman smells in her garden, but roses or heliotropes or sweet peas; not vegetable matter that we taste at our din-

[1]Walt Whitman, *Specimen Days*.

ner, but asparagus or celery or tomatoes. If for the specific words that Whitman has used in the preceding description we substitute more general terms, we shall at once perceive a loss in vividness: *clothing*, for instance, does not provoke as definite an image as does "yellow-striped jackets"; nor *portable canvas shelters*, as "little wall-tents and shelter-tents"; nor *men are working*, as "men are driving in tent-poles, wielding their axes with strong, slow blows"; nor *utensils*, as "pots and kettles" and "buckets." For vigor, for suggestiveness, for a spur to the imagination, the specific word should be chosen.

Degrees of the specific. A word may be specific in relation to another word and yet be general in relation to a third. That is, words are specific in varying degrees. *Orchard-bloom* is more specific than *flowerage;* but *peach-blossoms* is still more specific than *orchard-bloom.* Or, again, *fragrance* (in its usual sense of sweet smell) is more definite than *odor*—which may be pleasant or otherwise; *scent of violets*, or *fragrance of lilies*, or "the breath of the forest . . . perfumed with nothing less delicate than sweetbrier," is more definite than *fragrance.* By a comparison of the three descriptions that follow we may observe varying degrees of the specific on a larger scale.

1. Enter Clay, a boy of twenty.[1]

2. Clement Hale enters. He is a handsome boyish young man of about three and twenty, immaculately dressed in a fashionable dressing suit.[2]

3. Mr. Robinson is really an uncommonly nice looking young fellow. He must, one thinks, be the *jeune premier;* for it is not in reason to suppose that a second such attractive male figure should appear in one story. The slim, shapely frame, the elegant suit of new mourning, the small head and regular features, the pretty

[1]Augustus Thomas, *The Witching Hour.*
[2]Sir A. W. Pinero, *Sweet Lavender.*

little mustache, the frank clear eyes, the wholesome bloom on the youthful complexion, the well-brushed glossy hair, not curly, but of fine texture and good dark color, the arch of good nature in the eyebrows, the erect forehead and neatly pointed chin, all announce the man who will love and suffer later on. And that he will not do so without sympathy is guaranteed by an engaging sincerity and eager modest serviceableness which stamp him as a man of amiable nature.[1]

In 1, the subject is assigned membership in a pretty large class—youths of twenty. There is nothing more definite than this for the imagination to work upon, and the image evoked by it is likely to be only a faint and fluctuating composite of many individuals. In 2, the class is more restricted; the imaginary youth must be boyishly handsome and fashionably dressed. But there are so many types of boyish good looks and so many ways of being fashionably dressed that the mental picture created has wavering outlines. In 3, the subject is first assigned to a class still more restricted than that indicated in 1—the "uncommonly nice looking," the true *jeune premier* in a popular love story. Then an attempt is made to individualize him by mentioning characteristic details of his appearance which will mark him off from all other uncommonly nice-looking young lovers. The outlines of the mental picture grow more sharply defined and the reader accords young Robinson an imaginative reality which he cannot so easily give to Clement, and can scarcely give at all to Clay.

Amount of detail regulated by purpose. The degree of specificness, and the amount of concrete detail, will be regulated by the purpose of the description and by the comparative importance of the object described in relation to the composition as a whole. If the writer's impression or feeling is general, he will naturally use general words

[1]G. B. Shaw, *Man and Superman*.

to convey it, as in Wordsworth's "All things that love the sun are out of doors." When Ruskin used "no lovelier piece of lowland scenery," "diviner waters," "no pastures ever lightened in springtime with more passionate blossoming," "no sweeter homes," he had in mind a more general effect than had Turgenieff or Whitman in passages previously quoted:

> Twenty years ago, there was no lovelier piece of lowland scenery in South England, nor any more pathetic in the world, by its expression of sweet human character and life, than that immediately bordering on the sources of the Wandle, and including the lower moors of Addington, and the villages of Beddington and Carshalton, with all their pools and streams. No clearer or diviner waters ever sang with constant lips of the hand which "giveth rain from heaven"; no pastures ever lightened in springtime with more passionate blossoming; no sweeter homes ever hallowed the heart of the passer-by with their pride of peaceful gladness—fain hidden—yet full confessed.[1]

In the following sentence, from a description of a young sailor's first visit to the East, more specific phrasing than "strange odors of blossoms" would have been false to the reality, for without some experience of the flora of India or Ceylon he could not have distinguished the odors more sharply:

> We drag at our oars with aching arms, and suddenly a puff of wind, a puff faint and tepid and laden with strange odors of blossoms, of aromatic wood, comes out of the still night—the first sigh of the East on my face.[2]

As a condition of good proportion, or of fidelity to the facts, striking or important objects in the foreground of a landscape will receive more intensive treatment than dis-

[1] Preface to *The Crown of Wild Olive.*
[2] Joseph Conrad, *Youth.*

tant objects which fuse together into the background; people who are most important in the story or scene will be treated in more detail than those who are merely accessory. In *Far From the Madding Crowd* Hardy thus briefly, but adequately, touches off the appearance of the Aged Maltster's son:

> "Ay, sure," said his son, a young man about sixty-five, with a semi-bald head and one tooth in the left center of his upper jaw, which made much of itself by standing prominent, like a milestone in a bank.

The scene as a whole is the interior of the malt-house and the group of rustics there assembled. The Maltster's son is but one of several; in looking at the room and its occupants, one's eyes would rest upon him but momentarily, noting a prominent feature or two and then passing on to something else. To choose another illustration from the same writer, at the tranter's party in *Under the Greenwood Tree* there is much bustle and motion and there are many persons present. First one, then another, steps forward into fleeting prominence—among them Thomas Leaf, a minor character:

> "Tommy Leaf, don't ye be afeard! Come and sit here in the settle."
>
> This was addressed to the young man before mentioned, consisting chiefly of a human skeleton and a smock-frock, who was very awkward in his movements, apparently on account of having grown so very fast that before he had had time to get used to his height he was higher.
>
> "Hee-hee-ay!" replied Leaf, letting his mouth continue to smile for some time after his mind had done smiling, so that his teeth remained in view as the most conspicuous members of his body.

Then a burst of laughter, or a movement, or a loud remark draws the attention elsewhere, or someone blocks the view,

and we postpone a more minute observation of Thomas Leaf until some future occasion. But when Miss Fancy Day, the heroine of the story, comes within eyeshot, she deserves a fuller description:

> We gain a good view of our heroine as she advances to her place in the ladies' line. She belonged to the taller division of middle height. Flexibility was her first characteristic, by which she appeared to enjoy the most easeful rest when she was in gliding motion. Her dark eyes—arched by brows of so keen, slender, and soft a curve that they resembled nothing so much as two slurs in music—showed primarily a bright sparkle each. This was softened by a frequent thoughtfulness, yet not so frequent as to do away, for more than a few minutes at a time, with a certain coquettishness; which in its turn was never so decided as to banish honesty. Her lips imitated her brows in their clearly-cut line and softness of curve; and her nose was well shaped—which is saying a great deal, when it is remembered that there are a hundred pretty mouths and eyes for one pretty nose. Add to this, plentiful knots of dark-brown hair, a gauzy dress of white, with blue facings; and the slightest idea may be gained of the young maiden who showed, amidst the rest of the dancing-ladies, like a flower among vegetables.

To sum up: The imagination responds most easily and surely to the specific word and the concrete detail, and hence we should try to make our descriptions as specific and concrete as our purpose will allow. Avoiding at the one extreme the meager generalities which leave imagination unstirred, and at the other, the superfluities of detail which leave it stunned, we should proportion the amount of detail to the relative importance or interest of the object we are describing.

(2) *Comparison*

Kinds of comparison. Comparison, in its broad sense, is a setting forth of the likeness or the difference between two or more objects. If the comparison is intended to

bring out some point or points of difference, it is known as a contrast, e.g.,

> All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
> The buttercups, the little children's dower—
> Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

Among comparisons designed to point out similarity three kinds are to be distinguished. The first is simple, or literal, comparison, in which the things compared are of the same general kind, as in the comparison of one person with another, or of one table, or horse, or violin with another; e.g.,

> Jukes had shut his eyes, and his face in a moment became hopelessly blank, like the face of a blind man.

The second is simile, in which the things compared are not of the same kind—the points of resemblance being apparent rather than real, or relatively far fewer than those of unlikeness—as in the comparison of a man and a lion, a woman's mouth and a rosebud, or a fall of snow and a counterpane: e.g.,

> Deep in the sun-searched growths the dragon-fly
> Hangs like a blue thread loosened from the sky.

The third is metaphor, which is condensed simile, the comparison being implied, but not actually stated; e.g.,

> O, then I saw her eye was bright,
> A well of love, a spring of light!

Contrast. Contrast is valuable in description chiefly as a means of emphasis, of presenting objects in high relief. Sunshine and blue sky after a spell of rainy weather, the silence of the house after the children have gone away on a

visit, the warmth and comfort of a bright fire on the hearth when driving sleet plays a tattoo on the window-panes, the gliding smoothness of a canoe after a jolting ride in a motor-car, the first dinner at home after an absence—these, and a host of others, are intensified by contrast. Anyone who has traveled can recall how his observations and impressions were sharpened by novelties which could be (and probably instinctively were) contrasted with things at home:

> But a fresher delight is to be found in the footpaths, which go wandering away from stile to stile, along hedges, and across broad fields, and through wooded parks, leading you to little hamlets of thatched cottages, ancient, solitary farm-houses, picturesque old mills, streamlets, pools, and all those quiet, secret, unexpected, yet strangely familiar, features of English scenery that Tennyson shows us in his idyls and eclogues. These by-paths admit the wayfarer into the very heart of rural life, and yet do not burden him with a sense of intrusiveness. He has a right to go whithersoever they lead him; for, with all their shaded privacy, they are as much the property of the public as the dusty highroad itself, and even by an older tenure. . . . An American farmer would plow across any such path, and obliterate it with his hills of potatoes and Indian corn; but here it is protected by law, and still more by the sacredness that inevitably springs up, in this soil, along the well-defined footprints of centuries. Old associations are sure to be fragrant herbs in English nostrils; we pull them up as weeds.[1]

In *Typhoon* Joseph Conrad makes effective use of contrast. After hours of battling with terrific wind and seas the steamer *Nan-Shan* ran into the circle of calm at the center of the typhoon, and the deafening roar of the wind ceased for a time. To the officers "after the whisper of their shouts their ordinary tones, so distinct, seemed . . . very loud in the amazing stillness of the air. It seemed to them they were talking in a dark and echoing vault." The first mate, coming from below decks, found that "the un-

[1]Hawthorne, *Our Old Home.*

expected stillness of the air oppressed him like an overpowering wind." And finally, to the phlegmatic and self-contained captain himself "this quietude of the air was startlingly tense and unsafe, like a slender hair holding a sword suspended over his head. By this awful pause the storm penetrated the defenses of the man and unsealed his lips." Again, to use another illustration, it is the contrast between the peaceful sights and sounds of Kensington Gardens and the bustle of the surrounding city that gives a heightened effect to the following:

> In this lone open glade I lie,
> Screened by deep boughs on either hand;
> And at its head, to stay the eye,
> Those black-crowned, red-boled pine-trees stand.
>
> Birds here make song, each bird has his,
> Across the girdling city's hum.
> How green under the boughs it is!
> How thick the tremulous sheep-cries come!
>
> Sometimes a child will cross the glade
> To take his nurse his broken toy;
> Sometimes a thrush flit overhead
> Deep in her unknown day's employ.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Scarce fresher is the mountain sod
> Where the tired angler lies, stretched out,
> And, eased of basket and of rod,
> Counts his day's spoil, the spotted trout.
>
> In the huge world which roars hard by
> Be others happy, if they can!
> But in my helpless cradle I
> Was breathed on by the rural Pan.
>
> I, on men's impious uproar hurled,
> Think often, as I hear them rave.

That peace has left the upper world,
And now keeps only in the grave.

Yet here is peace forever new!
When I, who watch them, am away,
Still all things in this glade go through
The changes of their quiet day.

Then to their happy rest they pass;
The flowers close, the birds are fed,
The night comes down upon the grass,
The child sleeps warmly in his bed.

Calm soul of all things! make it mine
To feel, amid the city's jar,
That there abides a peace of thine,
Man did not make, and cannot mar![1]

The contrast may be strongly insisted upon by the writer, or it may be left to the reader's perception. In the preceding quotation from Arnold it is touched on lightly; Arnold might have stressed it by describing in a few contrasting stanzas the roar and hurry and hardness of the neighboring London streets, instead of relying for his effect upon two or three references. One's audience and the effect one aims at—and one's temper of mind perhaps most of all—dictate the degree of emphasis to be given to the contrast.

Literal comparison. Literal comparisons are useful for their informing power. They are more exact than figurative comparisons, and belong characteristically to exposition. That is, in exposition they are developed more fully and play a relatively more substantial part, for the brevity usually sought in description scarcely allows the detailed comparison which is frequently so valuable in exposition. But simple comparison is nevertheless used freely in de-

[1]Matthew Arnold, "Lines Written in Kensington Gardens."

scriptive work, and fortunate is the writer who can by means of it call up such clear images as these:

1. He smiled from on high at Jukes and went on smoking and glancing about quietly, in the manner of a kind uncle lending an ear to the tale of an excited schoolboy.[1]

2. This unusual form of address, though mumbled rather than spoken, caused the body of Mr. Jukes to start as though it had been prodded under the fifth rib.[1]

Simile and metaphor. What figurative comparisons lack in exactness they make up in stimulus to the imagination. The special virtue of simile and metaphor is that they set the fancy working. A striking and appropriate simile brings an object vividly to mind:

A deep, narrow valley in the hills, silent and solitary. The sky crossed from side to side like a roof supported on two walls of green.[2]

The comparison in the second sentence gives a vivid impression of the depth and narrowness of the valley; the reader may find himself, in fancy, looking upward from the bottom of a valley at a sky so hemmed in by the hills on either side that it no longer seems "that inverted bowl they call the sky," but a roof indeed. So with metaphor. When Jeffries speaks of dew on the grass as "a rainbow broken into drops," he presents a picture which instantly flashes into the imagination. Figurative comparisons are in themselves beautiful, too, when they are genuine and appropriate. Their quality is further shown in the following examples:

1. The square man with the long gray beard, quite unmoved by anything, drew back to the door and spoke, and his voice was like a fall of stones in the bottom of a mine.[3]

2. The night was hollow about me like an empty church.[4]

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[1]Conrad, *Typhoon.*
[2]Richard Jeffries, *The Story of My Heart.*
[3]Blackmore, *Lorna Doone.*
[4]Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae.*

3. When this grave man smiled, it was like sunshine in a shady place.[1]

4. Little fish begin to leap; they spring and fall in glittering showers like opalescent blown spray.[2]

5. Here the great plain was the common background; my course to Sfax lay over it, broken at first by a blossoming of gardens round a town or village, and twice I came out on the sea; but always the course was over a plain with elemental mark and quality—with an omnipresence as of the sea on a voyage. The line between man's domain and nature is as sharply drawn on this plain as on a beach; where man has not labored the scene stretches out with nature in full possession, as on the ocean; his habitation and territory are islands.[3]

6. His laugh, which on light occasions was ready and frequent, had in it no great depth of gayety, or sense for the ludicrous in men or things; you might call it rather a good smile become vocal than a deep real laugh.[4]

7. Up and down, and to and fro, ever mounting through the wooded foot-hills, the broad white high-road wound onward into Grünewald. On either hand the pines stood coolly rooted—green moss prospering, springs welling forth between their knuckled spurs; and though some were broad and stalwart, and others spiry and slender, yet all stood firm in the same attitude and with the same expression, like a silent army presenting arms.[5]

8. Suddenly darkness gathered in the west, and a furious blast of sleet and hail drove full in our faces, icy cold, and urged with such demoniac vehemence that it felt like a storm of needles. It was curious to see the horses; they faced about in extreme displeasure, holding their tails like whipped dogs, and shivering as the angry gusts, howling louder than a concert of wolves, swept over us.[6]

9. The lark's song like a waterfall in the sky.[7]

In the following quotation we see the method of comparison applied to the description of so unpictorial a thing

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[1]Stevenson, *The Silverado Squatters.*
[2]Lafcadio Hearn, *Two Years in the French West Indies.*
[3]George E. Woodberry, *North Africa and the Desert.*
[4]Carlyle, *The Life of John Stirling.*
[5]Stevenson, *Prince Otto.*
[6]Parkman, *The Oregon Trail.*
[7]Richard Jeffries, *The Story of My Heart.*

as a habit of mind. It proves to be graphic, for the hidden processes of Mr. Pendyce's mind are set forth in terms of what is visible or tangible Strict accuracy is sacrificed, because in such analogies the truth is only partial; but the description was not written for students of psychology:

> It was not his habit to welcome new ideas. A new idea invading the country of the Squire's mind was at once met with a rising of the whole population, and either prevented from landing, or if already on shore instantly taken prisoner. In course of time the unhappy creature, causing its squeaks and groans to penetrate the prison walls, would be released from sheer humaneness and love of a quiet life, and even allowed certain privileges, remaining, however, "that poor, queer devil of a foreigner." One day, in an inattentive moment, the natives would suffer it to marry, or find that in some disgraceful way it had caused the birth of children unrecognized by law; and their respect for the accomplished fact, for something that already lay in the past, would then prevent their trying to unmarry it, or restoring the children to an unborn state, and very gradually they would tolerate this intrusive brood. Such was the process of Mr. Pendyce's mind.[1]

Figurative comparison can seldom be used effectively at such length as in the passage just quoted. Part of the charm as well as part of the power of a simile or metaphor lies in its brevity, its almost instantaneous appeal to the imagination. An extended figure, unless handled with special skill, is artificial—an exercise for the writer's ingenuity and a distraction to the reader rather than a help or stimulus. Ordinarily comparison, whether literal or figurative, will be most happily used to give point or emphasis to description by enumeration, as at the end of the portrait of Fancy Day already quoted, or to add variety or beauty. It has, however, two further uses which are important enough for separate consideration.

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[1]John Galsworthy, *The Country House.*

Fundamental image. The first of these consists in providing what is technically known as a fundamental image, a general impression or outline of a subject which makes it easier to relate the details to one another and to bring them into focus as a whole.[1] The italicized portions of the following quotations are instances of the fundamental image:

1. The Valley is a nearly level area, about six miles in length and from half a mile to a mile in width, sunk almost a mile in perpendicular depth below the general level of the adjacent region. *It may be likened to a gigantic trough hollowed in the mountains,* nearly at right angles to the irregular trend. . . . This trough . . . is quite irregular, having several reëntering angles and square recesses, let back, as it were, into its sides; still, a general northeast-by-easterly direction is maintained in the depression, until we arrive near its upper end, when it turns sharply, at right angles almost, and soon divides into three branches, through either of which we may, going up *a series of gigantic steps,* as it were, ascend to the general level of the Sierra.[2]

2. The Bay of Monterey has been compared by no less a person than General Sherman to *a bent fishing-hook;* and the comparison, if less important than the march through Georgia, still shows the eye of a soldier for topography. Santa Cruz sits exposed at the *shank;* the mouth of the Salinas River is at *the middle of the bend;* and Monterey itself is cosily ensconced beside the *barb.*[3]

3. Cape Cod is *the bared and bended arm* of Massachusetts: *the shoulder* is at Buzzard's Bay; *the elbow or crazy-bone,* at Cape Mallebarre; *the wrist* at Truro; and the sandy *fist* at Provincetown.[4]

4. From your position you can overlook the landscape. If you look back over the country you have passed through, you will see the hills lying calm and still in the sunlight, their surfaces sectioned off into little farms. I remember *we likened the scene to a patchwork quilt spread over a billowy bed.* A prettily-arranged quilt it was. On the side of the larger billow, which lay opposite us, there

[1] A fundamental image is not necessarily derived from a comparison but in practice it commonly is.
[2] J. D. Whitney, *The Yosemite Guide-Book*
[3] Stevenson, *Across the Plains.*
[4] Thoreau, *Cape Cod.*

was a large right triangle of emerald-green velvet—a field of rich, young grass.[1]

The foregoing quotations are from descriptions more or less topographical, and it is in such descriptions, in which the bearing of one locality upon another must be apprehended if a correct idea of the whole is to result, that the fundamental image is of greatest value.

Description of unfamiliar objects. Comparison is very useful in the description of objects unfamiliar to the reader. "They heard the unmelodious tooting of a foot-power foghorn," writes Kipling, in *Captains Courageous*. For the initiated this is perhaps enough to bring back a recollection of that peculiar noise, but for the landsman who has never heard one of these sleep-dispellers it will have scant meaning. The effect is different when the sentence is quoted entire:

They heard the unmelodious tooting of a foot-power foghorn—a machine whose note is as that of a consumptive elephant.

In that last part there is a suggestion of a wheezy sound, but of great volume; all notion of tootings made on a child's trumpet or a fish-peddler's horn at once vanishes as the bulk of an elephant heaves into mental view. The mind is given something it can grasp by the comparison of the unfamiliar sound with a sound it can vividly imagine. Usually the comparison will lie between the unfamiliar object and one that is familiar. An instance occurs in Conrad's *Amy Foster*:

They thought they were being taken to America straight away, but suddenly the steam-machine bumped against the side of a thing like a house on the water. The walls were smooth and black, and there uprose, growing from the roof as it were, bare trees in the shape of crosses, extremely high. That's how it appeared to him then, for he had never seen a ship before.

[1]Student's Theme.

In what other terms but those of the known is it possible to present the unknown?

We walked up narrow lanes where our gharry could by no means have passed.

This is well enough for those who have seen a *gharry*, but the statement has no descriptive force for those who have not. The latter cannot even gauge the width of the lanes, for a gharry may be a very broad vehicle. Note the gain from the comparison in the sentence as Conrad wrote it:

We walked up narrow lanes where our gharry—a tiny box of a thing on wheels, attached to a jibbing Burmah pony—could by no means have passed.

On our ability to see resemblances, and on our understanding of what is likely to be unfamiliar to a majority of readers, depends much of our success in description.

The scene and the phenomenon which Hardy describes in the following passage from *A Pair of Blue Eyes* are unfamiliar to most of us; but he has taken such pains to give a clear impression and has found so many enlightening comparisons, that readers with any imagination can easily follow along with Knight and Elfrida. The quotation shows how, from time to time, a comparison may be effectively woven into the texture of a description. Though the description is extended, each comparison is brief:

They walked along in company, sometimes with the brook between them—for *it was no wider than a man's stride*—sometimes close together. The green carpet grew swampy, and they kept higher up.

One of the two ridges between which they walked dwindled lower and became insignificant. That on the right hand rose with their advance, and terminated in a clearly defined edge against the light, *as if it were abruptly sawn off*. A little further, and the bed of the rivulet ended in the same fashion.

They had come to a bank breast-high, and over it the valley was no longer to be seen. It was withdrawn cleanly and completely.

In its place was sky and boundless atmosphere; and perpendicularly down beneath them—small and far off—lay the corrugated surface of the Atlantic.

The small stream here found its death. Running over the precipice it was dispersed in spray before it was half-way down, and *falling like rain* upon projecting ledges, made minute grassy meadows of them. At the bottom the water-drops soaked away amid the débris of the cliff. This was the inglorious end of the rivulet.

"What are you looking for?" said Knight, following the direction of her eyes. She was gazing hard at a black object—nearer to the shore than to the horizon—from the summit of which came a nebulous haze, *stretching like gauze* over the sea.

"The *Puffin*, a little summer steamboat—from Bristol to Castle Boterel," she said.

She turned her back upon the boat, and saw, towering still higher than themselves, the vertical face of the hill on the right, which did not project seaward so far as the bed of the valley, but formed the back of a small cove, and so was *visible like a concave wall*, bending round from their position on the left.

From where they had been loitering, a grassy path wound along to the top of the precipice. When they were one quarter of the way up, Elfrida stopped to take breath. Knight stretched out his hand. She took it, and they ascended the remaining slope together. Reaching the very top, they sat down to rest by mutual consent.

"Heavens, what an altitude!" said Knight. "Over that edge, where nothing but vacancy appears, is a moving compact mass. The wind strikes the face of the rock, runs up it, *rises like a fountain* to a height far above our heads, curls over us in an arch, and disperses behind us. In fact, *an inverted cascade is there—as perfect as the Niagara Falls*—but rising instead of falling, and air instead of water. Now look here."

Knight threw a stone over the bank, aiming it as if to go onward over the cliff. Reaching the verge, *it towered into the air like a bird*, turned back, and alighted on the ground behind them. They themselves were in a dead calm.

"A boat crosses Niagara immediately at the foot of the falls, where the water is quite still, the fallen mass curving under it. *We are in precisely the same position with regard to our atmospheric cataract here.* If you run back from the cliff fifty yards, you will be in a brisk wind.[1]

[1]The passage is here condensed; italics not in the original.

(3) *Suggestion of Effect*

Objects that arouse emotion. The last sentence in the preceding quotation brings us to the third means of description—indicating the effect of an object upon a beholder. By telling how a thing affects us it is possible to suggest something of its qualities or characteristics. The reader's imagination is called on to form an image that can produce an effect similar to the one described. But inasmuch as the same feeling—repulsion, let us say—may be aroused by a variety of objects, it is obvious that suggestion of effect should be accompanied by enough concrete detail to keep the imagination from going far astray. By itself it is of little use if any distinctness of outline or accuracy of detail is desired. But used in combination with the other means of description it may help to make a passage vivid and lifelike. The grandeur of a splendid cataract is forcibly suggested when we are told that a party of light-hearted tourists become speechless with awe when they confront it; we gain a more graphic idea of the might of a great storm in the mountains when we learn that the hunters exposed to it stop their ears in terror and tremble in every muscle. In the following example suggestion of effect is sufficiently definite for most readers:

> The rest of us dug feverishly in a great heap of earth at the other end of the shelter. There we uncovered Walter, a lad who had kept us laughing at his drollery on many a rainy night. The earth had been heaped loosely on him and he was still conscious.
>
> "Good old boys!" he said weakly, "I was about done for." In our haste we dislodged another heap of earth which completely buried him again, and it seemed a lifetime before we were able to remove it. I have never seen a finer display of pure courage than Walter's.
>
> "Easy, boys! I can't feel anything below me waist. I think I'm 'urt down there."

We worked as swiftly and as carefully as we could. We knew that he was badly wounded, for the earth was soaked with blood; but when we saw, we turned away sick with horror. Fortunately, he lost consciousness while we were trying to disentangle him from the fallen timbers, and he died on the way to the field dressing-station.[1]

In dealing with the extraordinary or the extreme, description by effect has obvious advantages, and so is open to wide abuse by sensational writers whose stock in trade consists in experiences and situations which make the flesh "creep," the hair "stand on end," the limbs "tremble," the forehead glisten with "great beads of perspiration," and the breath come in "convulsive gasps." This abuse should serve to make one wary of the stock reactions (and wary, too, of the subject which is so extraordinary that it strains language to the breaking point), but should not blind one to the real value of the indirect means. A paragraph from Hawthorne's chapter on English poverty, in *Our Old Home*, illustrates a genuinely literary application of the method—though to get the full effect of the passage the half-dozen pages preceding it should be read also:[2]

The population of these dismal abodes appeared to consider the sidewalks and middle of the street as their common hall. . . . Whatever the disadvantages of the English climate, the only comfortable or wholesome part of life, for the city poor, must be spent in the open air. The stifled and squalid rooms where they lie down at night, whole families and neighborhoods together, or sulkily elbow one another in the daytime, when a settled rain drives them within doors, are worse horrors than it is worth while (without a practical object in view) to admit into one's imagination. No wonder that they creep forth from the foul mystery of their interiors, stumble down from their garrets, or scramble up out of their cellars, on the upper step of which you may see the grimy housewife, before the shower is ended, letting the raindrops gutter

[1] J. N. Hall, *Atlantic*, April, 1916.

[2] Readers of *Our Old Home* will recall in that same chapter on poverty a more striking example, the description of the baby in the almshouse—too painful for quotation here.

down her visage; while her children . . . swarm into the daylight and attain all that they know of personal purification in the nearest mud-puddle. It might almost make a man doubt the existence of his own soul, to observe how Nature has flung these little wretches into the street and left them there, so evidently regarding them as nothing worth, and how all mankind acquiesce in the great mother's estimate of her offspring. For, if they are to have no immortality, what superior claims can I assert for mine? And how difficult to believe that anything so precious as a germ of immortal growth can have been buried under this dirt heap, plunged into this cesspool of misery and vice! As often as I beheld the scene, it affected me with surprise and loathsome interest, much resembling, though in a far intenser degree, the feeling with which, when a boy, I used to turn over a plank or an old log that had long lain on the damp ground, and found a vivacious multitude of unclean and devilish-looking insects scampering to and fro beneath it. Without an infinite faith, there seemed as much prospect of a blessed futurity for those hideous bugs and many-footed worms as for these brethren of our humanity and co-heirs of all our heavenly inheritance. Ah, what a mystery! Slowly, slowly, as after groping at the bottom of a deep, noisome, stagnant pool, my hope struggles upward to the surface, bearing the half-drowned body of a child along with it, and heaving it aloft for its life, and my own life, and all our lives. Unless these slime-clogged nostrils can be made capable of inhaling celestial air, I know not how the purest and most intellectual of us can reasonably expect ever to taste a breath of it. The whole question of eternity is staked there. If a single one of those helpless little ones be lost, the world is lost!

Reactions to persons. Suggestion of effect is admirably calculated to add lively or convincing touches to the description of a person. Most people are sensitive to the personality of others, even if this sensitiveness is merely instinctive liking or dislike. In meeting a man for the first time we are apt to undergo a reaction toward him that is something besides a recognition of his height, weight, complexion, features, and voice. He makes us feel awkward and constrained, or at ease, or arouses us to unusual loquacity, or calls forth our friendliest feelings, or leaves

us cold and indifferent. To add something of this to the sketch of a person is often to give it just the touch of truth or suggestiveness required to make him live in the reader's imagination. In the following quotations, description by effect is variously and skillfully used, adding an element of very real interest:

1. How very lovable her face was to him! There was nothing ethereal about it; all was real vitality, real warmth, real incarnation. Yet when all was thought and felt that could be thought and felt about her features in general, it was her mouth which turned out to be the magnetic pole thereof. Eyes almost as deep and speaking he had seen before, and cheeks perhaps as fair; brow as arched, a chin and throat almost as shapely; her mouth he had seen nothing at all to equal on the face of the earth. To a young man with the least fire in him, that little upward lift in the middle of her top lip was distracting, infatuating, maddening. He had never before seen a woman's lips and teeth which forced upon his mind, with such persistent iteration, the old Elizabethan simile of roses filled with snow. Perfect, he, as a lover, might have called them offhand. But no; they were not perfect. And it was the touch of the imperfect upon the intended perfect that gave the resistlessness, because it was that which gave the humanity.[1]

2. When she [Nedda Freeland] and her father walked, or sat, or went to concerts together, their talk was neither particularly intimate nor particularly voluble; they made to each other no great confidences. Yet each was certain that the other was not bored—a great thing; and they squeezed each other's little fingers a good deal—very warming. Now with his son Alan, Felix had a continual sensation of having to keep up to a mark and never succeeding—a feeling, as in his favorite nightmare, of trying to pass an examination for which he had neglected to prepare; of having to preserve, in fact, form proper to the father of Alan Freeland. With Nedda he had a sense of refreshment; the delight one has on a spring day, watching a clear stream, a bank of flowers, birds flying.[2]

3. She was small and slight in person; pale, sandy-haired, and with eyes habitually cast down: when they looked up they were

[1]Hardy, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles.*
[2]John Galsworthy, *The Freelands.*

very large, odd, and attractive; so attractive that the Reverend Mr. Crisp, fresh from Oxford, and curate to the Vicar of Chiswick, the Reverend Mr. Flowerdew, fell in love with Miss Sharp; being shot dead by a glance of her eyes which was fired all the way across Chiswick Church from the school-pew to the reading-desk.[1]

4. When the first inviting notes of the mazurka sounded, I looked about me with composure, and with a cool and easy air approached a long-faced young lady with a red and shiny nose, a mouth that stood awkwardly open, as though it had come unbuttoned, and a scraggy neck that recalled the handle of a bass-viol. I went up to her, and, with a perfunctory scrape of my heels, invited her to the dance. She was wearing a dress of faded rosebud pink, not full-blown rose color; on her head quivered a striped and dejected beetle of some sort on a thick bronze pin; and altogether this lady was, if one may so express it, soaked through and through with a sort of sour ennui and inveterate lack of success. From the very commencement of the evening she had not once stirred from her seat; no one had thought of asking her to dance. One flaxen-headed youth of sixteen had, through lack of a partner, been on the point of addressing this lady, and had taken a step in her direction, but had thought better of it, stared at her, and hurriedly dived into the crowd.[2]

EXERCISES

1. Describe as specifically as you can in a single sentence one of the following sensations from each group:

(*a*) *The taste* of some strong cheese, of camphor, of a green apple, of boiled cabbage, of stewed prunes, of mustard, of root-beer, of English walnuts, of cranberries, of Turkish coffee.

(*b*) *The smell* of drying hay, of a closed street-car, of an old attic, of a cellar, of a restaurant, of burning leaves, of a wet forest, of a salt marsh, of the college library, of a flower-garden in June.

(*c*) *The sound* of a violin played out of tune, of marching men, of a waterfall, of a peal of thunder, of horses in a stable, of surf, of a crying child, of skates on ice, of a sewing-machine, of an automobile horn.

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[1] Thackeray, *Vanity Fair*.
[2] Turgenieff, *The Diary of a Superfluous Man*.

2. Distinguish by comparison as sharply and concisely as you can the following sounds:

(*a*) The noise made by the gong of a street-car and that of a fire-engine.

(*b*) The report of a rifle and that of a shotgun.

(*c*) The sound of frying and that of boiling.

(*d*) The noise of waves breaking on a beach and that of waves dashing against rocks.

(*e*) The noise of a dog-fight and that of a cat-fight.

(*f*) The sound of wind in a forest and in open country.

(*g*) The noise of an automobile running on low gear and that of the same machine running on high gear.

(*h*) The voice of a man and that of a woman.

3. Write between two and three hundred words on one of the following subjects, making the contrast as significant as possible:

(*a*) A street on a warm summer day and on a cold winter day.

(*b*) A pleasure resort in season and out of season.

(*c*) A young man or woman as high school senior and as college freshman.

(*d*) A household when the mother is present and when she is absent.

(*e*) The bleachers when the home team is losing and when it is winning.

4. Bring to class a list of five subjects which afford good opportunities for effective contrast.

5. From a work of fiction or a book of travel copy for class discussion a description of something unfamiliar to you.

6. Write three descriptions of a person:

(*a*) In the first, give details of his appearance only.

(*b*) In the second, give fewer details of his appearance and add details of characteristic behavior—peculiarities of gait, posture, speech, action.

(*c*) In the third, retain most of the details of the second and add a few suggestions of the effect he has upon you when you meet him.

7. Bring to class for discussion a brief description in which there is suggestion of effect. What loss, if any, would result from the omission of this means of description?

III. Selection of Details

Unity. Economy of attention, as we have seen, is necessary to effective description. It is gained by concentration upon essential details, by a weeding out of all facts that do not contribute to the intended effect. Barring the occasional lucky accident, every description that produces singleness of effect has purpose behind it. The aim need not be expressed—it seldom is, as a matter of fact; it is sufficient if the reader feels unity. Nor need the writer have in mind a purpose that could be put into a definite statement, such as the purpose of an exposition or an argument; it is enough if he himself has a *feeling* for the unity of the thing he is describing.

Details for their own sake. Insistence on unity of impression needs one important qualification. There is a kind of description which is justified chiefly by the truth or beauty of the details it presents. It exists for these alone. The writer is keenly observant and looks about him with a mind sensitive to all sorts of impressions:

When I get two-thirds up the hill, I look round, and am for the hundredth time surprised by the landscape of the river valley and the horizon with its distant blue-scalloped rim. It is a spring landscape, and as impossible a fortnight ago as the songs of birds. It is a deeper and warmer blue than in winter, methinks. The snow is off the mountains, which seem even to have come again like the birds. The undulating river is a bright-blue channel between sharp-edged shores of ice retained by the willows. The wind blows strong but warm from west by north (so that I have to hold my paper tight while I write this), making the copses creak and roar, but the sharp tinkle of a song-sparrow is heard through it all. But, ah! the needles of the pine, how they shine, as I look down over the Holden wood and westward! Every third tree is lit with the most subdued, but clear, ethereal light, as if it were the most delicate frost-work in a winter morning, reflecting no heat—only light. And as they rock and wave in the strong wind,

even a mile off, the light courses up and down as over a field of grain, i.e., they are alternately light and dark, like looms above the forest, when the shuttle is thrown between the light woof and dark web. At sight of this my spirit is like a lit tree.[1]

Much of the work of authors like Thoreau, Burroughs, John Muir, and Richard Jeffries is of this type, and to lovers of nature even their most rambling descriptions are interesting. But rambling description soon becomes intolerable (even to lovers of nature) in the hands of less skillful observers and recorders, just as the rambling, *Roundabout Papers* type of personal essay becomes intolerable in the hands of commonplace writers. The student of composition will do wisely to avoid the pitfalls of this kind of writing and seek unity through the selection of details that are (1) characteristic and (2) harmonious.

Characteristic details. In the following description of a "dreary inn" Stevenson has seized upon a few characteristic details:

The Frisby House, for that was the name of the hotel, was a place of fallen fortunes, like the town. It was now given up to laborers, and partly ruinous. At dinner there was the ordinary display of what is called in the West a *two-bit house:* the tablecloth checked red and white, the plague of flies, the wire hencoops over the dishes, the great variety and invariable vileness of the food, and the rough coatless men devouring it in silence. In our bedroom the stove would not burn, though it would smoke; and while one window would not open, the other would not shut. There was a view on a bit of empty road, a few dark houses, a donkey wandering with its shadow on a slope, and a blink of sea, with a tall ship lying anchored in the moonlight. All about that dreary inn frogs sang their ungainly chorus.[2]

Only significant facts have been brought to our attention. The details are peculiar to a poor hotel with a dreary out-

[1] Thoreau, *Early Spring in Massachusetts.*
[2] *The Silverado Squatters.*

look and distinguish it sharply from a well-managed and pleasantly situated inn. Similarly, in the following brief description Parkman has used only such facts as are characteristic of his camp on a very hot day, omitting whatever is common both to cool days and hot days:

> Through the following day the sun glared down upon us with a pitiless, penetrating heat. The distant blue prairie seemed quivering under it. The lodge of our Indian associates parched in the burning rays, and our rifles, as they leaned against the tree, were too hot for the touch. There was a dead silence through our camp, broken only by the hum of gnats and mosquitoes. The men, resting their foreheads on their arms, were sleeping under the cart. The Indians kept close within their lodge, except the newly-married pair, who were seated together under an awning of buffalo-robes.[1]

Thus to seize upon characteristic features is fundamental to good description. This emphasis upon what is individual and salient is a quality of most of the descriptions previously quoted. As we recall, say, the description of the cavalry encampment, of Tess, of the English footpaths, we see that distinctive features have been set before us, and that a host of non-essentials has been passed over in silence.

Description from memory will help to cultivate the power of grasping essentials. Last summer you were on the coast of Maine, perhaps, or by the shore of Lake Michigan, or in lower California, or in the mountains of Tennessee, and some scene struck your fancy. Now that time has elapsed and some details have become blurred, what remains most distinctly in your memory? That residue will represent your most vivid impressions; from your individual point of view it will be the best material for description. Time has helped you to thrust aside the merely trivial or general.

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[1] *The Oregon Trail.*

Harmonious details. Even characteristic details that do not harmonize with the aim of a description, that distract in any way from the desired effect, should be omitted. If singleness of effect is wanted, the various statements or suggestions should be "all chiming together like consonant notes in music or like the graduated tints in a good picture."[1]

It was getting pretty dim by the time we turned the corner of the woods, sweating and panting with that long run, and see the sycamores thirty yards ahead of us; and just then we see a couple of men run into the bunch and heard two or three terrible screams for help. "Poor Jake is killed, sure," we says. We was scared through and through, and broke for the tobacker field and hid there, trembling so our clothes would hardly stay on. . . .

We laid down, kind of weak and sick, and listened for more sounds, but didn't hear none for a good while but just our hearts. We was thinking of that awful thing laying yonder in the sycamores, and it seemed like being that close to a ghost, and it give me the cold shudders. The moon come a-swelling up out of the ground, now, powerful big and round and bright, behind a comb of trees, like a face looking through prison bars, and the black shadders and white places begun to creep around, and it was miserable quiet and still and night-breezy and graveyardy and scary.[2]

There were other characteristic features of that setting, as many readers of Mark Twain will at once recall, but only those are mentioned which are in harmony with the feeling of terror that possessed the boy who is telling the story. The point is further illustrated by another quotation from the same source:

The frost was working out of the ground and out of the air, too, and it was getting closer and closer onto barefoot time every day; and next it would be marble time, and next mumbletypeg, and next tops and hoops, and next kites, and then right away it would be summer and going in a-swimming. It just makes a boy homesick to look ahead like that and see how far off summer is. Yes, and

[1]Stevenson, *A Humble Remonstrance.*
[2]Mark Twain, *Tom Sawyer, Detective.*

it sets him to sighing and saddening around, and there's something the matter with him, he don't know what. But anyway, he gets out by himself and mopes and thinks; and mostly he hunts for a lonesome place high up on the hill in the edge of the woods, and sets there and looks away off on the big Mississippi down there a-reaching miles and miles around the points where the timber looks smoky and dim it's so far off and still, and everything's so solemn it seems like everybody you've loved is dead and gone too, and done with it all.

Don't you know what that is? It's spring fever.

Compare this description with that of Stevenson's "dreary inn" (page 264) and it is evident that the purpose of each dominates the choice of details, and that in each the impression of unity depends upon the details being in harmony with one another. If Mark Twain had introduced characteristic facts of spring in Missouri as compared with spring in some other region such as Canada or the tropics, he would have dissipated the force of his picture. Instead, he has rigorously excluded everything that did not chime with the major idea of "spring fever."

Selection for variety and movement. We have seen that the subject-matter of description includes every variety of sensation, and this must be insisted upon first, last, and always. "Still life" descriptions have their place, but it is not the most important; they are easily surpassed by the painting. But in expressing the varied appeal of the world—motion, change, sensation—description is on its own ground. When it is on its own ground, observe its freshness and living quality:

The night had closed in rain, and rolling clouds blotted out the lights of the villages in the valley. Forty miles away, untouched by cloud or storm, the white shoulder of Dongo Pa—the Mountain of the Council of the Gods—upheld the evening star. The monkeys sung sorrowfully to each other as they hunted for dry roots in the fern-draped trees, and the last puff of the day-wind brought from

the unseen villages the scent of damp wood smoke, hot cakes, dripping undergrowth, and rotting pine-cones. That smell is the true smell of the Himalayas, and if it once gets into the blood of a man he will, at the last, forgetting everything else, return to the Hills to die. The clouds closed and the smell went away, and there remained nothing in all the world except chilling white mists and the boom of the Sutlej River.[1]

May we not fairly attribute much of the liveliness and interest of this description to the fact that even in so brief a compass each of the five senses has, in imagination, been set working?

Movement is the condition of life. It is always interesting, and skillful writers do not fail to bring it into their descriptions whenever it is possible and appropriate. Here lies the peculiar force of the verb. The inept or wooden description is built up too largely upon adjectives to the neglect of the verbs, but not so with the condensed and vivid description. The authors of the following descriptions have used verbs to good advantage:

1. The sun had fallen well behind the home wood when the "guns" stood waiting for the last drive of the day. From the keeper's cottage in the hollow, where late threads of crimson clung in the brown net work of Virginia-creeper, rose a mist of wood smoke, dispersed upon the breeze. Sound there was none, only that faint stir—the far, far callings of men and beasts and birds—that never quite dies of a country evening. High above the wood some startled pigeons were wheeling, no other life in sight; but a gleam of sunlight stole down the side of the covert and laid a burnish on the turned leaves till the whole wood seemed quivering with magic.[2]

2. Close at the zenith rode the belated moon, still clearly visible, and, along one margin, even bright. The wind blew a gale from the north; the trees roared; the corn and the green grass in the

[1]Kipling, "Namgay Doola."
[2]Galsworthy, *The Country House.*

valley fled in whitening surges; the dust towered into the air along the road and dispersed like the smoke of battle.[1]

3. When the south wind blows, it is a study to see three or four of these air-kings (hawks) at the head of the valley, far up toward the mountain, balancing and oscillating upon the strong current: now quite stationary, except for a slight tremulous motion like the poise of a rope-dancer, then rising and falling in long undulations, and seeming to resign themselves passively to the wind; or, again, sailing high and level far above the mountain's peak, no bluster and haste, but—occasionally a terrible earnestness and speed.[2]

EXERCISES

1. What should govern your choice of details in description?

2. The scene is the waiting-room of a railroad station. What details would you select to obtain an effect (*a*) of cheerfulness, (*b*) of gloom, (*c*) of boredom?

3. In describing a student's room what details would you select to bring out (*a*) the owner's satisfaction, (*b*) his mother's dismay at the confusion, (*c*) an artist's irritation at the jarring colors and lack of arrangement?

4. In describing a camp what details would you use to bring out (*a*) the pleasure of one who liked camping, and (*b*) the discomfort of one who did not?

5. Read Browning's "Up at a Villa and Down in the City" (the exercise may, perhaps, be most conveniently carried out if the poem is read to the class) and point out how the choice of details would differ if the speaker preferred country life.

6. The scene is a lonely place on a moonlit night. What details would you use to describe it as seen by (*a*) one who enjoyed solitude, (*b*) a naturalist, (*c*) a painter, (*d*) one who was afraid?

7. The scene is an old farm-house and yard. How would you make your readers feel (*a*) that the inhabitants led cheerful lives, (*b*) that they led cheerless lives, (*c*) that the place was very old?

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[1] Stevenson, *The Silverado Squatters.*
[2] John Burroughs, *Wake Robin.*

8. Bring to class for discussion a description that illustrates singleness of effect. Be prepared to point out what the effect is and how it is achieved.

9. Why is (*a*) better description than (*b*)?

(*a*)

Gray drizzling mists the moorlands drape,
Rain whitens the dead sea,
From headland dim to sullen cape
Gray sails creep wearily.

(*b*)

The plum-orchard, apple-orchard, gardening, seedlings, cuttings, flowers, vines,

Grains, marl, clay, loam, the subsoil plow, the shovel, pick, rake, hoe, irrigation, draining,

The curry-comb, the horse-cloth, the halter, bridle, bits, the very wisps of straw.

10. Write several short themes on outdoor subjects, with special attention to variety and movement. The following are merely suggestions:

(*a*) A field where men are plowing and harrowing: the smell and the look of freshly turned earth, the breathing of horses as they pass near you, the driver's shouts to his team when he reaches the end of a furrow, birds gleaning the newly-plowed land, crows cawing and wheeling about tree-tops near by, shadows of spring clouds passing over the hillside, your pleasure in idling there a few moments in the warm breeze.

(*b*) A sunny morning on an old wharf: the shining white lighthouse on the point, the dancing sunlight on the ruffled water, the cries and movements of gulls, on the wharf an old man mending a net and a barefoot boy fishing for flounders, the creaking of blocks and the rhythmical swaying of men as sail is made on a schooner a few hundred feet offshore, a small cat-boat heeling over in the breeze.

(*c*) A slippery sidewalk on a winter morning: small boys polishing off the slide; behavior of several people when they find how slippery it is; remarks you overhear.

(*d*) An open place in the woodland: a woodchuck or a rabbit scuttles off as you approach; the light wind "talking" in an

oak tree, the quivering leaves of birch or aspen; the warmth of the sunshine after the cool shadows of the wood, finding a patch of wild strawberries, a brown thrasher practicing opera in a tree-top; the surprise of a chipmunk when he finds an unexpected visitor on his playground.

11. How did Hardy make his description of a scene unfamiliar to most readers so easy to follow (page 255)?

12. Bring to class for discussion a short description which is full of variety and movement.

13. In the following descriptions point out all words that suggest movement:

(*a*)

A mile behind is Gloucester town
  Where the fishing fleets put in;
A mile ahead the land dips down
  And the woods and farms begin.
Here, where the moors stretch free
  In the high blue afternoon,
Are the marching sun and talking sea,
And the racing winds that wheel and flee
  On the flying heels of June.

(*b*)

I know of nothing more calculated to make a man sick of this world than a stableyard on a rainy day. The place was littered with wet straw that had been kicked about by travelers and stable-boys. In one corner was a stagnant pool of water, surrounding an island of muck; there were several half-drowned fowls crowded together under a cart, among which was a miserable, crest-fallen cock, drenched out of all life and spirit; his drooping tail matted, as it were, into a single feather, along which the water trickled from his back; near the cart was a half-dozing cow, chewing the cud, and standing patiently to be rained on, with wreaths of vapor rising from her reeking hide; a wall-eyed horse, tired of the loneliness of the stable, was poking his spectral head out of a window, with the rain dripping on it from the eaves; an unhappy cur, chained to a dog-house hard by, uttered something every now and then, between a bark

and a yelp; a drab of a kitchen wench tramped backward and forward through the yard in pattens, looking as sulky as the weather itself; everything, in short, was comfortless and forlorn, excepting a crew of hardened ducks, assembled like boon companions round a puddle, and making a riotous noise over their liquor.

IV. Point of View

Physical limitations. The writer's purpose, his attitude toward the things he is describing, constitute his mental point of view. He selects details in harmony with them. But there is a physical point of view, as well, which is often an important factor in description. The writer should not forget the limitations of his senses, such as his inability to see around a corner, or to smell the odor of pines when he is in a valley and they are on a hilltop several miles away, or to hear, from the summit of a mountain, the sound of a brook in the valley below. In a night scene, for example, many objects visible by day will be lost to sight in the darkness; if the scene is to be visualized as it would really appear, either these must be omitted, no matter how familiar they may be to the writer, or their inclusion must be explained. The physical point of view in the following description is the top of a bare hill, from which we are asked to look down upon a tiny hamlet:

The coming night gradually obscured the chimneys; but the position of the sequestered little world could still be distinguished by a few faint lights, winking more or less ineffectually through the leafless boughs, and the undiscerned songsters they bore, in the form of balls of feathers, at roost among them.[1]

Here the writer, in "undiscerned," warns us that the mention of the birds, invisible under the circumstances, is a momentary turning away from the actual scene. He is giving us

[1]Thomas Hardy, *The Return of the Native.*

information, but he is not for the time being describing the view from the hilltop in the growing darkness.

Changing the point of view. In the following passage, the point of view is shifted twice, not with a violent wrench, but with proper warning:

> At intervals, from the top of one of the rare, low swells of the land, Vanamee overlooked the wider horizon. On the other divisions of the Quien Sabe the same work was in progress. Occasionally he could see another column of plows in the adjoining division—sometimes so close at hand that the subdued murmur of its movements reached his ear; sometimes so distant that it resolved itself into a long, brown streak upon the gray of the ground. Farther off to the west on the Osterman ranch other columns came and went, and, once, from the crest of the highest swell on his division, Vanamee caught a distant glimpse of the Broderson ranch. There, too, moving specks indicated that the plowing was under way. And farther away still, far off there beyond the fine line of the horizons, over the curve of the globe, the shoulder of the earth, he knew were other ranches, and beyond these others, and beyond these still others, the immensities multiplying to infinity.[1]

The point of view may shift and change as often as desired—as the observer rides about the city, or gets higher up the mountain, or follows the windings of the river, or recalls associated objects or ideas growing out of what he sees—but each change should be made reasonably clear to the reader, lest the scenes become indistinct or lost in confusion. Note the directness of the following announcements of change in the point of view, taken from a portion of Ruskin's description of St. Mark's:

> And now I wish that the reader, before I bring him into St. Mark's Place, would imagine himself for a little time in a quiet English cathedral town, and walk with me to the west front of its cathedral. Let us go together up the more retired street, at the end of which we can see. . . .

[1]Frank Norris, *The Octopus*.

. . . and so forward until we come to larger houses. . . .

. . . We will go along the straight walk to the west front and there stand for a time. . . .

. . . And then let us quickly recollect that we are in Venice, and land at the extremity of the Calle Lunga San Moisè. . . .[1]

Less formal, but equally explicit are these from a story of Hamlin Garland's:

A corn field in July is a sultry place. . . .

The field bordered on a road, and on the other side of the road ran a river. . . .

The girl put her elbows on the fence and watched her little brother as he sped away to the pool. . . .

An impulse seized her, and she squeezed between the rails of the fence, and stood in the road looking up and down. . . .

And now, as she rested, the beauty of the scene came to her. . .[2]

By such means a series of separate images may be kept perfectly distinct in the reader's mind, as in the following description by Hawthorne, who is always scrupulous where clearness is concerned:

At this point, however, we will turn back, in order to follow up the other road from Leamington, which was the one that I loved best to take. It pursues a straight and level course, bordered by wide gravel-paths and overhung by the frequent elm, with here a cottage and there a villa; on one side a wooden plantation, and on the other a rich field of grass or grain; until, turning at right angles, it brings you to an arched bridge over the Avon. Its parapet is a balustrade carved out of freestone, into the soft substance of which a multitude of persons have engraved their names or initials, many of them now illegible, while others, more deeply cut, are illuminated with fresh green moss. These tokens indicate a famous spot; and casting our eyes along the smooth gleam and shadow of the quiet stream, through a vista of willows that droop on either side into the water, we behold the gray magnificence of Warwick Castle, uplifting itself among stately trees, and rearing its turrets high above their loftiest branches. We can scarcely think the

[1] Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice.*
[2] Hamlin Garland, *Main-Travelled Roads.*

scene real, so completely do those machicolated towers, the long line of battlements, the massive buttresses, the high-windowed walls, shape out our indistinct ideas of the antique time. It might rather seem as if the sleepy river (being Shakespeare's Avon, and often, no doubt, the mirror of his gorgeous visions) were dreaming now of a lordly residence that stood here many centuries ago; and this fantasy is strengthened, when you observe that the image in the tranquil water has all the distinctness of the actual structure. Either might be the reflection of the other. Wherever Time has gnawed one of the stones, you see the mark of his tooth just as plainly in the sunken reflection. Each is so perfect that the upper vision seems a castle in the air, and the lower one an old stronghold of feudalism, miraculously kept from decay in an enchanted river.[1]

Work of this kind, with its courteous recognition of the needs of a reader, exhales a fine urbanity. If it would not belittle the intellectual quality of such writing, it might be said that this attentiveness to point of view is a manifestation of good manners in description.

EXERCISES

1. Comment on the point of view in the following:

(*a*)

Then I, as was meet,
Knelt down to the God of my fathers, and rose on my feet,
And ran o'er the sand burnt to powder. The tent was unlooped;
I pulled up the spear that obstructed, and under I stooped,
Hands and knees on the slippery grass-patch, all withered and gone,
That extends to the second inclosure, I groped my way on
Till I felt where the foldskirts fly open. Then once more I prayed
And opened the foldskirts and entered, and was not afraid,
But spoke, "Here is David, thy servant!" And no voice replied.
At first I saw naught but the blackness—the vast, the upright
Main prop which sustains the pavilion: and slow into sight
Grew a figure against it, gigantic and blackest of all.
Then a sunbeam, that burst through the tent-roof, showed Saul.

[1] *Our Old Home.*

(*b*)

Upon reaching the deck the following morning, I saw that we were threading an archipelago of little, bare, sandy islands, our course between them being carefully marked with spars, which at night bear kerosene lamps. Other steamers and a few sailing vessels appeared in several directions. The distant coast was low and yellow. In a couple of hours Asunada came into view, a level of one-story houses and huts, with a huge tower for pumping oil, the steeple of a church, and a few steamers and schooners at the long, wooden wharves, alone breaking the dull uniformity. The background was of sand-hills, and there was not a single blade of vegetation anywhere in sight. In the center of the town were several long lines of railway cars, and the telegraph-posts extending down the coast told the direction the road takes toward the interior. We steamed slowly in, and were made fast to a large hulk lying at one of the wharves. Upon landing, I noticed that most of the houses were built of rough logs, though many mud huts also appeared. There were no streets or sidewalks, only crooked lanes of deep sand, if I except the asphalt pavement which led to the railway station. The place had the appearance of one of our Western towns of a few months' growth; everything seemed new, incomplete, temporary.

2. Is the point of view kept clearly before the reader in the following?

When a person stands upon one of the long boat-wharfs of Watch Hill, and looks toward the shore, he sees a view that he remembers many years. The wharf extends about two hundred feet out into the ocean. On the left, across the blue ocean, one can see a long peninsula which forms the Little Narragansett Bay. On the point of this peninsula stand the white fort with its large cannon and the steel-colored barracks of Fort Mansfield.

On the right of the spectator, a stone's throw away, is Watch Hill Point. The most prominent thing here is the lighthouse with the high white tower. Near it is the squatty Life-saving Station.

In Watch Hill proper is the bathing beach with its long stretch of fine white sand. The bath houses are a little distance from the shore. There are two sections. One is called the public section, for anybody may use these; and the other one is called the private

section, for only those who buy season tickets are allowed to use them. On the principal street are situated all the stores. They consist of markets, grocery stores, drug stores, shore dinner houses and other small stores characteristic of such places. There are also two hotels upon this street. These hotels are surrounded on three sides by large, broad piazzas, upon which dances are often held. To the right of the street a bluff overlooks the ocean, and on this are situated four of the most costly cottages of the resort. These cottages are very neatly arranged, surrounded with fine green lawns that are carefully cared for. These green lawns are interlaced with white cement walks that curve and wind about.

To the left of the street Little Narragansett Bay is seen, in which all the launches and sailboats are kept. Across the Bay rise the ragged hills, upon which some very beautiful cottages are built. Many of these cottages are over a hundred feet long and can be seen from a great distance. To the right of these cottages the hills continue and pass out of sight on the distant horizon.

The cottages that I mentioned previously, that have such fine lawns, have a large sand-dune for a background, and a pretty legend is connected with this hill, from which the resort got its name.

Far over the top of this sand-dune is the Club House. The club house belongs to the Misquanicut Golf Links, and every afternoon great numbers of the cottagers and hotel guests go to the Club to spend the afternoon either at golf or tennis.

Watch Hill covers an area about two miles square, contains seventy-five cottages and six large hotels. There are people from all over the United States who come to the resort for the summer. It is renowned for its fine bathing beach and the exquisite landscape that surrounds the Hill.

3. Write a short description of a night scene, relying entirely on what your senses report at the time chosen for the description.

4. Tell specifically how a description of the same scene by daylight would differ in details.

5. Note changes in the point of view in "Newport, Isle of Wight" (page 629) and "A Corn-Field" (page 633) and explain how the changes are made evident.

6. Write a theme of five or six pages with descriptive intent, but with narrative "binder" (compare, for example, Turgenieff's *Sketches of a Sportsman* or Kipling's *City of Dreadful Night*). Choose for your subject some stimulating experience that affords variety and movement, and involves changes in point of view—a night spent in the open, a day's tramp with a strange lodging at the end of it, a canoe-trip, a ride to town in a farm wagon (begun before sunrise), an ascent of a mountain. If your memory does not provide what you need, use your next holiday to take yourself out of your beaten track into one of the new worlds of experience that lie all around you.

GENERAL EXERCISES IN DESCRIPTION

1. What means of description are used in the following passage from the *Iliad?*

> Then came she "Helen, fair among women" straightway to the place of the Skaian gates. And they that were with Priam . . . being elders of the city, sat at the Skaian gates. These had now ceased from battle for old age, yet were they right good orators, like grasshoppers that in a forest sit upon a tree and utter their lily-like voice; even so sat the elders of the Trojans upon the tower. Now when they saw Helen coming to the tower they softly spake winged words one to the other: "Small blame is it that Trojans and well-greaved Achaians should for such a woman long time suffer hardships; marvellously like is she to the immortal goddesses to look upon."

2. Why has (*b*) more descriptive force than (*a*)?

(*a*) A handsome, singing tortoise crossed my path.

(*b*) It was on this same trail, later, that three important things befell. The first was the appearance of a high-backed tortoise. Just before he came out to meet me, I heard somewhere in the bushes a thin, trembling sound, very high and a little querulous in character. Then the singing tortoise came waddling out underfoot, singing as he came. His back was finely marked in broad patterns of gold, and he carried his shell along with a certain proud gravity. He stopped and looked at my feet when they came conveniently within his range of vision,

turning his eyes quickly from one to the other. But for reasons of his own he was not afraid; instead he put up his small, leathery head, and as if in salute, sent forth again his clear, penetrating trill. Then he waddled off again over an avenue of golden flower balls that had dropped down from the acacia trees which met to form a canopy somewhere far above his head. And in the distance I heard him singing.

3. Criticize the following descriptions:

A Mask Ball

It was a beautiful night about the middle of July; the night of the Ball. It had been a very warm day, but at sunset a nice breeze sprang up, making the evening delightfully cool and also an ideal one for a dance.

In the hotel, where the ball was to be given, was a great deal of subdued excitement. From seven o'clock on, people seemed to mysteriously disappear and by 7:30 there was hardly anyone to be seen on the porches or in the exchange. About half an hour later, the advance guard of the maskers showed itself in the form of a grotesquely shaped "colored" woman. She paraded through the parlors, much to the amusement of the guests, who were now beginning to reassemble there.

Shortly after eight o'clock the Ball started. The usual Pierettes and Pierottes, clowns, big girls dressed as little ones, little girls dressed as big ones, bathing girls, acrobats, etc., were well represented, as well as many others. It was a gay and motley crowd that marched in the promenade and danced the first dance.

Just after this dance was finished, the orchestra began playing the Wedding March from Tannhäuser. Through the door at the other end of the ballroom came a slowly moving procession, led by a short, stout gentleman wearing a high silk hat and a frock coat. Following him came the bride, bridesmaids, the groom, and all the usual accessories of a wedding procession. They marched to the opposite end of the room, where the bride and groom were married, according to the customs of a mock wedding, by the minister, i. e., by the short stout person wearing the frock coat. The wedding party then walked solemnly around the room and out.

The fun continued all the evening. The dances were separated by various novelties and "stunts," such as Nantuckets, robber dances, acrobatic feats, etc. But the dancing contest must not be forgotten. There were quite a number of good dancers on the floor; enough to demand some close decisions from the judges. After this event prizes were awarded to the prize winners in the contest and those having the prettiest, most original, and most comic costumes. Everyone voted that the affair was an enjoyable one.

The New York Stock Exchange Building

To New Yorkers a source of pride is the New York Stock Exchange. The building of this institution is one of the most ornamental which in this era of building, in that city, have been given to New York. Located on one of the broadest streets, diagonally across the way from the historical sub-treasury building and opposite to the offices of the noted financier, J. P. Morgan, it commands the attention and admiration of everybody. In contradistinction to the tendency to construct very high buildings the "Stock Exchange" is low, but what it has lost in height it has gained in beauty. Massive columns of finest marble, constructed according to the Corinthian pattern, constitute a chief element of the beauty of its exterior. Above these is a roof resembling the style of the ancient Greek temples, and for which the ornamental figures, that are to embellish it, have not yet been completed. Passing the building at evening, one cannot help observe the artistic nature of its illumination. Through the immense windows a soft, pale blue light streams forth. This appears to be produced by having the electric light globes of a light-blue color, and placed within small niches in the ceiling. As we go from consideration of the artistic to that of the practical elements of this building, probably the first that would attract a visitor's attention would be the extensive system of telephones which occupies a considerable floor space. The walls exhibit huge systems of marking stock quotations by means of electric buttons for the convenience of members. A visitor's gallery admits to a perfect view of the interior. No one, who has once visited the "Exchange" during the hours of a busy day, is ever likely to forget that sight, which for excitement finds not its equal in the busy business world.

CHAPTER VI

NARRATION

I. The Nature of Narration

A distinguishing mark of narration. Narration is made up primarily of events, actions, happenings—occurrences that follow one another chronologically. It is impossible for us to conceive of the material of a narrative as existing, so to speak, all at once. The simplest narrative statement, such as "John fell from the ladder and broke his arm," implies the passage of time; the fall comes *before* the break. Exposition, argument, and description may, and often do, involve the element of time, but unlike narration they are not absolutely bound up with it. John's broken arm, as an illustration of compound fracture, or as the subject of an argument between doctors as to the best method of treatment, or as material for description, does not necessarily involve the passage of time. But as a detail in narrative it immediately takes its place in a chronological sequence.

Three ways of classifying narratives. Narratives are commonly classified in three different ways: 1. According as they have or do not have plot; 2. According to whether the events recounted are facts or fiction; 3. According to literary types.

1. *With or without plot.* The term "plot" is used sometimes in a narrow, technical sense; sometimes in a broad, popular sense. We shall consider both uses. In its narrow sense plot is thus defined by the *Century Dictionary:* "the story of a play, poem, novel, or romance, comprising a complication of incidents which are at last unfolded by

unexpected means." The author of a narrative with a plot of this kind tries to conceal the outcome of his story until he reaches the *dénouement*, or untangling of the knots of complication, which usually comes at, or near, the end. He may, for example, begin with an event or situation that arouses curiosity as to its causes and then carefully withhold the key to a full explanation until he gets to the end of the narrative. This is the method Poe uses in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue": the story proper begins with the finding of two women who have been brutally murdered under circumstances that baffle the ingenuity of the police; it ends with a complete explanation of the mystery. Or the author may involve his characters in complications or difficulties from which escape seems very unlikely or even impossible, only to rescue them triumphantly at the end. Shakespeare employs this method in *The Merchant of Venice:* Shylock, it seems, must be allowed to cut a pound of flesh from Antonio's breast; but Portia saves the day by pointing out that in doing so Shylock must not shed "one drop of Christian blood." Or, again, the writer may lead the reader on to an expected conclusion and then at the end give an unlooked-for twist to the situation. This is what Thomas Bailey Aldrich does in "Our New Neighbors at Ponkapog": he surprises his readers at the end of the story by disclosing the fact that the chief "characters" are birds, not human beings.

In its wider meaning, "plot" signifies any sequence of happenings leading to a result. With this sense of the word in mind we say that such a work as John Fiske's *American Revolution* has plot: from the beginning the narrative is directed toward a certain end, the independence of the American colonies; events are selected which lead the reader step by step toward that narrative goal; when the goal is reached, the narrative stops. That is, the author

conceived of his thread of narrative as a unit; he had in mind, as part of his plan, a definite conclusion which he aimed to reach. Furthermore, the conclusion aimed at was an event brought about by ascertainable causes; and it was a part (and a large part) of his purpose to make those causes clear to a reader. To treat any narrative material so that the events appear in a sequence of cause and effect as well as in a sequence of time, and so that they work together to bring about a definite conclusion, is to give one's work plot in the wider sense of the word.

In narration without plot in either the narrow or broad sense, events are selected not because of their bearing on other events and on the conclusion, but because of their intrinsic interest, importance, or informative value. It is from this point of view that one ordinarily selects incidents in writing a gossipy letter, in recording the events of the day in a diary or in a ship's log, or in writing a newspaper account of a fire, a prize-fight, or an earthquake. Pepys's *Diary* and Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast* are familiar examples of narration without plot.

2. *Fact or fiction.* In narratives of fact the writer recounts actual occurrences with such accuracy as he is capable of. He is under tacit obligations to his reader to state as fact only what he believes to be fact. When he turns from fact to surmise or to rumor, he should make the distinction perfectly clear. Reputable newspapers, for example, try to distinguish between authentic news and vague rumor:

> FEZ, French Morocco, June 17 (Associated Press)—Unconfirmed reports have been circulated among native tribesmen that Abd-el-Krim, Riffian leader opposing the French, was killed during a recent French aërial bombardment of his forces. Tribesmen supporting Abd-el-Krim were said to be disheartened at the report of his death. No information to substantiate the report has been received.

Among the leading kinds of narratives of fact are history, biography, autobiography, stories of explorations, hunting trips, and other personal experiences, and accounts of passing events in the newspapers.

In writing fiction the author is free to handle facts as he pleases. He may base his story on actual happenings, but alter persons, places, and events to such an extent that they are unrecognizable. His hero may experience adventures that in reality befell several different men; or the adventures may be purely imaginary. Each of his persons may be a portrait "from the life," or each may be a composite of traits that the writer has observed in various acquaintances, or each may be unlike anyone who has ever lived. The places mentioned in his story may be real or they may be imaginary. The tacit obligation under which the writer of fiction labors is to be interesting. It is no defense of a dull story to say that all the occurrences in it are "facts" and all its persons "real." Among the leading types of fiction are the novel, the romance, the short story, the play, the epic, and shorter narrative poems.

3. *Literary types.* Narration, being one of the oldest and most popular of the arts, has developed many distinct literary forms, some of which have highly specialized techniques of their own. There follows a list of the chief types with a brief characterization of each.

(a) *History.* History relates events in the life of a race, a nation, an institution, or a locality.

(b) *Biography.* Biography gives the history of an individual.

(c) *Autobiography.* An autobiography is the history of an individual written by himself.

(d) *Journals, diaries, logs, records.* These are narratives in which events are set down—usually at more or less regular intervals—soon after they occur.

(e) *Newspaper "stories."* Newspaper "stories" are accounts of current happenings which have value as news.

(f) *The short story.* The short story is any work of prose fiction "requiring from a half-hour to one or two hours in its perusal."[1]

(g) *The romance.* In dealing with the romance, as in dealing with the novel, we are on debatable ground. It is sometimes a matter of one critic's opinion against another's whether a given work of fiction is to be called a romance or a novel. But hair-splitting aside, we may say with some truth that a romance is a work of prose fiction, of greater bulk than the short story, treating of extraordinary persons and events. It may place its scene in remote corners of the world or in past times; it may recite highly unusual adventures; its heroes may perform prodigies of valor; its heroines may be without fault. In any case, if a story be a real romance, it lays stress on the unusual and wafts the reader far away from the concerns of ordinary living. *The Three Musketeers, Lorna Doone, Ivanhoe,* and *Treasure Island* are romances.

(h) *The novel.* As distinguished from the romance, the novel treats of more normal events and more usual people, often using a scene and a social atmosphere familiar to thousands of its readers. It need not be commonplace—good novelists always heighten and color their material—but it does not depend on the exceptional for its chief interest. *Vanity Fair, The Mill on the Floss, David Copperfield,* and *Tess of the D' Urbervilles* are novels.[2]

(i) *The play.* The play is a highly specialized form of narrative consisting of dialogue spoken by actors and of actions performed by them.

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[1]Poe, "Review of Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales.*" For a discussion of the short story, see Bliss Perry's *A Study of Prose Fiction,* chap. xii.

[2]Chap. ii of C. F. Horne's *Technique of the Novel* discusses interestingly what the novel is.

(j) *Allegory.* An allegory is a prose or verse narrative in which persons and events are figurative or symbolical. The reader is expected to catch a meaning above and beyond the obvious and external meaning, as in a parable. *The Faerie Queene* and *The Pilgrim's Progress* are examples.

(k) *Epic and ballad.* Two poetic forms of narrative that stand out distinctly are the epic and the ballad. The typical epic deals with legendary or mythical persons and with events of heroic proportions. In subject and treatment it is lofty. The ballad has been called a "minor epic." It is briefer and in form is ruder and more popular than the epic—"a complete satisfaction," as Professor Gummere tells us, "of the demand for 'more matter and less art.' "

The wide range of narration. In diversity of established forms the range of narration is very great—greater, indeed, than that of any other kind of writing. In point of difficulty, too, the range of narration is probably the widest, including the most artless of compositions and the most highly wrought and artistic.

To the extent that the chronological sequence of events provides the writer with a ready-made order for his work, narration is perhaps the simplest kind of writing. The abundance of readable narratives in newspapers and magazines shows that the fundamental principles of narration can be mastered by persons of no special talents for story telling. If we make the effort, most of us can learn to give a plain and straightforward account of our own experiences. Not to be able to do at least this much implies some degree of muddle-headedness; listen to Daniel Knott, who is trying to deliver some vital news:

"It war Dorkis, sir, would hev me come; but we knowed nothin' o' what's happened at the Manor. She's frightened out on her wits about Miss Sarti, an' she would hev me saddle Blackbird this

mornin', an' leave the plowin', to come an' let Sir Christopher an' my lady know. P'r'aps you've heared, sir, we don't keep thr Cross Keyes at Sloppeter now; a uncle o' mine died three 'ear ago, an' left me a leggicy. He was bailiff to Squire Ramble, as hed them there big farms on his hands; an' so we took a little farm o' forty acres or thereabouts, becos Dorkis didn't like the public when she got moithered wi' children. As pretty a place as iver you see, sir, wi' water at the back conven'ent for the cattle."

"For God's sake," said Maynard, "tell me what it is about Miss Sarti. Don't stay to tell me anything else now."[1]

But it is misleading to insist overmuch on the simplicity of narration. Some simple things, like the circle Giotto drew with a sweep of his brush, are deceptive—are attainable, as a rule, only through special aptitude long and severely disciplined.

The elements of narration. There are three elements always implicit in a narrative: (1) the things done, or the action; (2) the persons who take part in the action, or the characters; and (3) the place where events occur, or the setting. A single one of these elements may overshadow the others, or two of them may be emphasized while the third remains comparatively undeveloped. Sometimes all three elements are about equally developed. In a brief newspaper account, for example, character and setting are usually in marked subordination to action. The chief business of the newspaper is to tell what happens, and unless there is something very striking or unusual in the persons or places concerned it simply mentions them. But given an opportunity, such as the inauguration of a President of the United States or the flashing into momentary publicity of some odd or romantic personality, skilled reporters make effective use of setting and character. In narratives of travel the chief emphasis is commonly given

[1]George Eliot, "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story" in *Scenes of Clerical Life.*

to the setting, though this emphasis may be shifted to the action if the journey involves unusual hardships or dangers. Historical writings show marked differences among themselves in the stress given to the various narrative elements: some historians cram their work with incidents, merely giving the names of important persons and places; others make history largely a series of biographical studies, or find their interest centering in the environment that helped to shape certain men or events. Equally marked differences in the attention given to action, character, or setting occur in fiction. In Meredith's *The Egoist*, for example, character is more insisted upon than action or setting; in Stevenson's *The Pavilion on the Links* action and setting overshadow character; in Hardy's *The Return of the Native* setting frequently dominates action and character. Sometimes, as in Hardy's *Tess of the D' Urbervilles*, the three elements are about equally developed.

Of these three elements action will interest the largest number of readers. "What happened next?" is the question most people ask when a narrator pauses in his story. But only simple or tired minds remain forever satisfied with action for its own sake alone. As our minds develop and we are filled with a zest for life in all its richness, we desire that action shall often be expressive of something besides itself, that it shall stand for character or for ideas. Intelligent readers generally find their interest in action quickened when it reveals a trait of character or points to a significant comment on life. Were this not so, thoughtful men would hardly be held spellbound by a play so sensational and melodramatic in action as *Hamlet*, nor would they be keenly interested in so trivial an act as the eating of a macaroon—an act that helps to reveal Nora Helmer's character and situation, in Ibsen's *A Doll's House*.

No one narrative element is necessarily more important than the others. Much depends on the qualifications of the individual writer and on the audience and effects at which he aims. It is futile to tell a writer who has a keen eye for stirring incident and a faculty for constructing ingenious plots that he should let his talents rust and devote himself to subtle analyses of the motives and mental processes of his characters. He would probably damage himself as a writer if he were foolish enough to act on this advice. It is equally useless to tell such a writer as Henry James that what most readers want is a generous share of lively action. He is not writing for "most readers"; the few who do read his novels find them thoroughly interesting and enjoyable. Probably we shall come somewhere near the truth if we say that action makes for breadth of interest, character for depth, and setting for the reality and vividness of both. A sensible writer will feel free to emphasize that element in his narrative which seems to him most significant or interesting.

Interest through details. Concreteness is as useful in narration as in description. Condensed narratives, such as summaries of events, are sometimes necessary—in brief histories, for example, that cover a considerable stretch of time—and they may be very valuable for the information they give. But if one of the objects in writing a narrative be to gain and hold a reader's interest by stirring his imagination so that he may experience in fancy the events recounted, then clearly the most important or characteristic incidents should be related with sufficient concrete detail to give them body and vividness. There is some danger, of course, of damming the flow of a narrative by heaping up too many details, but the average beginner is far more liable to err through too little than through too much. His scanty and barren treatment leaves the reader's imagina-

tion untouched and his interest flagging. From this point of view reread "The Genius of Susan" (page 95), and observe how unsatisfactory are the last three paragraphs of quick-march narration.

The two accounts that follow deal with the same happenings. The first one gives a condensed statement of the main events in the descent of a mountain. The second one gives many concrete details of the experiences related in (1). There can be no question as to which is the more interesting account. The first version leaves us unstirred; the second version takes a much stronger hold of our imaginations, enabling us as we read to have a real share in the narrator's experiences.

1. In getting from the mountain into the valley Toby and I experienced hardships and dangers. Once we had to make our way down a cliff by holding on to projecting roots.

2. Our progress along the steep watercourse was necessarily slow, and by noon we had not advanced more than a mile. It was somewhere near this part of the day that the noise of falling waters, which we had faintly caught in the early morning, became more distinct; and it was not long before we were arrested by a rocky precipice of nearly a hundred feet in depth, that extended all across the channel, and over which the wild stream poured in an unbroken leap. On either hand the walls of the ravine presented their overhanging sides both above and below the fall, affording no means whatever of avoiding the cataract by taking a circuit around it.

"What's to be done now, Toby?" said I.

"Why," rejoined he, "as we cannot retreat, I suppose we must keep shoving along."

"Very true, my dear Toby; but how do you purpose accomplishing that desirable object?"

"By jumping from the top of the fall, if there be no other way," unhesitatingly replied my companion; "it will be much the quickest way of descent; but as you are not quite as active as I am, we will try some other way."

And so saying, he crept cautiously along and peered over into the abyss, while I remained wondering by what possible means we could overcome this apparently insuperable obstruction. As soon as my companion had completed his survey, I eagerly inquired the result.

"The result of my observations you wish to know, do you?" began Toby deliberately, with one of his odd looks: "well, my lad, the result of my observations is very quickly imparted. It is at present uncertain which of our two necks will have the honor to be broken first; but about a hundred to one would be a fair bet in favor of the man who takes the first jump."

"Then it is an impossible thing, is it?" inquired I, gloomily.

"No, shipmate; on the contrary, it is the easiest thing in life: the only awkward point is the sort of usage which our unhappy limbs may receive when we arrive at the bottom, and what sort of traveling trim we shall be in afterwards. But follow me now, and I will show you the only chance we have."

With this he conducted me to the verge of the cataract, and pointed along the side of the ravine to a number of curious-looking roots, some three or four inches in thickness, and several feet long, which, after twisting among the fissures of the rock, shot perpendicularly from it, and ran tapering to a point in the air, hanging over the gulf like so many dark icicles. They covered nearly the entire surface of one side of the gorge, the lowest of them reaching even to the water. Many were moss-grown and decayed, with their extremities snapped short off, and those in the immediate vicinity of the fall were slippery with moisture.

Toby's scheme, and it was a desperate one, was to intrust ourselves to these treacherous-looking roots, and by slipping down from one to another to gain the bottom.

"Are you ready to venture it?" asked Toby, looking at me earnestly, but without saying a word as to the practicability of the plan.

"I am," was my reply; for I saw it was our only resource if we wished to advance, and as for retreating, all thoughts of that sort had long been abandoned.

After I had signified my assent, Toby, without uttering a single word, crawled along the dripping ledge until he gained a point from which he could just reach one of the largest of the pendant roots; he shook it—it quivered in his grasp, and when he let it go, it twanged in the air like a strong wire sharply struck. Satisfied

by his scrutiny, my light-limbed companion swung himself nimbly upon it, and twisting his legs round it in sailor fashion, slipped down eight or ten feet, where his weight gave it a motion not unlike that of a pendulum. He could not venture to descend any farther; so holding on with one hand, he with the other shook one by one all the slender roots around him, and at last, finding one which he thought trustworthy, shifted himself to it and continued his downward progress.

So far so well; but I could not avoid comparing my heavier frame and disabled condition with his light figure and remarkable activity: but there was no help for it, and in less than a minute I was swinging directly over his head. As soon as his upturned eyes caught a glimpse of me, he exclaimed in his usual dry manner, for the danger did not seem to daunt him in the least, "Mate, do me the kindness not to fall until I get out of your way"; and then swinging himself more on one side, he continued in his descent. In the meantime I cautiously transferred myself from the limb down which I had been slipping to a couple of others that were near it, deeming two strings to my bow better than one, and taking care to test their strength before I trusted my weight to them.

On arriving toward the end of the second stage in this vertical journey, and shaking the long roots which were round me, to my consternation they snapped off one after another like so many pipe stems, and fell in fragments against the side of the gulf, splashing at last into the waters beneath.

As one after another the treacherous roots yielded to my grasp, and fell into the torrent, my heart sank within me. The branches on which I was suspended over the yawning chasm swung to and fro in the air, and I expected them every moment to snap in twain. Appalled at the dreadful fate which menaced me, I clutched frantically at the only large root which remained near me; but in vain; I could not reach it, though my fingers were within a few inches of it. Again and again I tried to reach it, until at length, maddened with the thought of my situation, I swayed myself violently by striking my foot against the side of the rock, and at the instant that I approached the large root caught desperately at it, and transferred myself to it. It vibrated violently under the sudden weight, but fortunately did not give way.

My brain grew dizzy with the idea of the frightful risk I had just run, and I involuntarily closed my eyes to shut out the view

of the depth beneath me. For the instant I was safe, and I uttered a devout ejaculation of thanksgiving for my escape.

"Pretty well done," shouted Toby underneath me; "you are nimbler than I thought you to be—hopping about up there from root to root like any young squirrel. As soon as you have diverted yourself sufficiently, I would advise you to proceed."

"Aye, aye, Toby, all in good time; two or three more such famous roots as this, and I shall be with you."

The residue of my downward progress was comparatively easy; the roots were in greater abundance, and in one or two places jutting out points of rock assisted me greatly. In a few moments I was standing by the side of my companion. . . . [1]

A master of vivid narrative, Rudyard Kipling, has put into four lines of verse some excellent advice concerning details:

> I keep six honest serving-men
> (They taught me all I knew):
> Their names are What and Why and When
> And How and Where and Who.

Specific answers to those six questions will give the details that go to make a narrative complete and satisfying. And, other things being equal, the more concretely those details are presented, the more interesting and vivid will be the result.

EXERCISES

1. Mention in class a narrative that has plot in the narrow sense of the word. Summarize the plot orally as concisely as you can.

2. Mention in class a narrative that has plot in the broad sense of the word. Summarize the narrative orally as concisely as you can.

3. Bring to class a brief newspaper account in which the distinction between fact and surmise or rumor is clearly made.

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[1] Herman Melville, *Typee*.

4. Classify such of the following books as you have read as romances or novels: *Pride and Prejudice; Guy Mannering; The Return of the Native; A Tale of Two Cities; The Last of the Mohicans; The Sea Hawk; The Marble Faun; Kidnapped; The Rise of Silas Lapham; Main Street; Daisy Miller; The Master of Ballantrae; Henry Esmond; Blood and Sand; Babbitt; Pendennis; The Light That Failed; Ethan Frome; Westward Ho! The House of Mirth; The Cloister and the Hearth; Les Miserables; The Vicar of Wakefield; Lord Jim; Casuals of the Sea; Arrowsmith; The Scarlet Letter; Sentimental Tommy; Cranford; Barchester Towers; Clayhanger; Tono-Bungay; Coniston; The Little French Girl; The Rescue; Miss Lulu Bett.*

5. Why is narration, for the majority of readers, the most interesting kind of composition?

6. Mention a narrative in which the chief interest lies in the action. Mention another in which the chief interest lies in character or setting. Can you recall a narrative in which the interest seems about equally divided among action, character, and setting?

7. Create interest through the use of details by expanding the following summary to a narrative of three or four hundred words:

> A man dines elaborately at a restaurant, making a great impression on the waiters. When the time for paying his bill comes, he states that he has no money in the world.

Compare your account with other versions written by the class. Which is the best? Why? Would it be possible to combine the peculiar merits of three or four of the must successful accounts? You might try to do this.

II. Finding Narrative Material

Narratives of fact. The two main sources of material for narratives of fact are personal experience and research.

Personal experience. The student is asked to write a narrative of fact. He examines his own experiences, run-

ning over in his mind the most promising. No matter where he has lived or what his life has been he is certain to have had experiences, or to have been an eye-witness of events, suitable for narration. Naturally he will wish to choose an incident likely to interest others if it is related simply and clearly. At first, probably, he will do well to select the liveliest, or most exciting, or most unusual material at his command—the material, that is, which is in itself the most interesting, the least dependent for its interest upon the way it is narrated. What events or circumstances have stirred his feelings most deeply, or have seemed most novel or extraordinary? Has he ever had a strong feeling of fear or a real sense of impending danger? Has he ever been thrilled by an act of courage or heroism? Has he ever been greatly amused by some humorous chain of events or ludicrous behavior? Has he ever watched with eagerness for the outcome of a race or game? Happenings that have aroused some emotion in the writer may, if honestly and clearly set forth, arouse an echo of that emotion in the reader. Such narrative material drawn from personal experience has a further advantage: being already familiar with it, the student can devote most of his attention to the important practice work of building up a readable narrative.

Research. The city editor says to a reporter, "Wilson, the tenement at 27 River Street is on fire. If there's a big story, call me up at once." By the time the reporter reaches River Street the tenants are out of the building and the fire is under control. What he can observe for himself has only small news value. He must rely on other witnesses to answer the important questions. Was anyone hurt? Were there any daring rescues? How did the fire start? What is the probable loss? In a word, he must search for his facts.

So must the historian, the biographer, and the student who is to write a true story not based wholly on his own observation or accumulated knowledge. How painstaking that search may be one learns by reading such a book as Farnham's *Life of Francis Parkman*. But the college student is hardly in a position, as a rule, to seek far afield for facts hitherto unused. Occasionally he may glean narrative material from friends or relatives, but usually he will conduct his research in books and magazines. Unless he is asked to write a summary of a particular narrative, however, he should try not to confine himself to a single source of information. Better results are gained from using as many sources as time and availability allow. If, for example, his subject is the Battle of Trenton, he should not simply paraphrase McMaster's account, say, but should find out what Fiske and Trevelyan and other historians have to tell about the battle and should look into one or two of the best available biographies of Washington. He will not be making an original contribution to American history—that, of course, is not expected of him—but he will be gaining knowledge of how to put facts together in a narrative of his own.

Fiction. The quest for material for a short piece of fiction seems baffling at first if we have never before tried our hands at imaginative writing. Perhaps we are more inclined to wait passively for a story to pop ready-made into our heads than to go actively to work piecing one together. But if the "inspiration" does not come, we must then do what most professional story writers do—seek the story.

Anything that can be expressed through character and action may serve as the starting-point of a story. It will be convenient to group the possibilities under four heads:

(1) *Starting from action.* Probably the commonest—and for the beginner generally the most successful—point of departure for a story is some action that interests the writer. He may read of it in a history or in a newspaper, he may hear of it from an acquaintance, he may see it with his own eyes, or he may even dream it. The point is that it strikes his fancy or arouses his curiosity. In the opening paragraph of "Wakefield," in *Twice-Told Tales*, Hawthorne tells us the source of that story:

> In some old magazine or newspaper I recollect a story, told as truth, of a man—let us call him Wakefield—who absented himself for a long time from his wife. . . . The wedded couple lived in London. The man, under pretense of going a journey, took lodgings in the next street to his own house, and there, unheard of by his wife or friends, and without the shadow of a reason for such self-banishment, dwelt upwards of twenty years. During that period he beheld his home every day, and frequently the forlorn Mrs. Wakefield. And after so great a gap in his matrimonial felicity—when his death was reckoned certain, his estate settled, his name dismissed from memory, and his wife, long, long ago resigned to her autumnal widowhood—he entered the door one evening, quietly, as from a day's absence, and became a loving spouse till death.

The bare outline of the story came to Hawthorne through his reading. From this beginning he proceeded to visualize the personality and motives of Wakefield and to develop specific details of action by means of which the story could be carried on. Sometimes the action that starts the imagination working is only a detached incident. Endicott's cutting of the cross from the British flag was a detached incident in early American history. It struck Hawthorne's imagination and he made it the culminating act in the narrative entitled "Endicott and the Red Cross." His "Maypole of Merrymount" had a similar historical origin, and so

had many other of his tales and sketches. Tennyson founded *Enoch Arden* on a story told him by a friend. Longfellow's *Evangeline* originated in the same way. The list might be extended almost indefinitely.

The "inspiration" in these and hundreds of other cases seems to consist partly in a curiosity as to how or why such-and-such a thing happened and what kind of people were concerned in it. If we accept the various incidents daily brought to our attention much as we accept the sunrise, they will hardly furnish us with narrative material. It is only when we let our minds play around them in a search for causes and for results that they begin to show promise of narrative development.

(2) *Starting from character.* Interest in a character is an excellent point of departure for constructing a story. The actions of the narrative grow out of the attempt to give the character a natural expression in word and deed. The story is shaped to illustrate those traits of personality which have appealed most strongly to the writer's sympathy, understanding, or imagination. People who really live in our imaginations do not remain passive or static there; they say and do things. Some writers—Thackeray and Bernard Shaw, for instance—often begin the preliminary work of composition by bringing together in imagination a group of interesting persons. The way these persons react on one another furnishes the main material of the story. When the imagination is warm and vivid the persons who people it lead a surprisingly real and vigorous existence, as the following quotation shows:

> Turgenieff knew . . . that I was an enthusiastic admirer of his writings; and one day . . . he asked me what I thought of Bazaroff [a character in *Fathers and Children*]. I frankly replied, "Bazaroff is an admirable painting of the nihilist, but one feels that you did not love him as much as you did your other heroes."

"On the contrary, I loved him, intensely loved him," Turgenieff replied, with an unexpected vigor. "When we get home I will show you my diary, in which I have noted how I wept when I had ended the novel with Bazaroff's death."

Turgenieff certainly loved the intellectual aspect of Bazaroff. He so identified himself with the nihilist philosophy of his hero that he even kept a diary in his name, appreciating the current events from Bazaroff's point of view. But I think that he admired him more than he loved him.[1]

Among narratives that have grown out of an interest in a personality are John Drinkwater's *Abraham Lincoln*, Rostand's *Cyrano de Bergerac*, Stevenson's *Weir of Hermiston* (based on the character of Lord Braxfield), and "A Lodging for the Night" (based on the character of François Villon). Sequels to popular stories like *Little Women* frequently grow out of the interest created in the persons of the story. Readers wanted to know more about Jo and Meg and the others in Miss Alcott's story, and this desire stimulated the author to write *Little Men* and *Jo's Boys*.

(3) *Starting from setting.* A locality, a house, a period of history, or some special type of civilization or of social life may give the original impulse to a story. Out of Thackeray's interest in the times of Addison and Steele grew *Henry Esmond;* out of Georg Eber's interest in ancient Egypt developed a whole series of romances; out of Paul Leicester Ford's interest in Revolutionary days grew *Janice Meredith.* That places sometimes suggest stories has been pointedly expressed by Stevenson in "A Gossip on Romance": "Some places speak distinctly. Certain dank gardens cry aloud for murder; certain old houses demand to be haunted; certain coasts are set apart for shipwreck." Once in conversation he said, "You may take a certain atmosphere and get action and persons to express it and

[1]Kropotkin, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist.*

realize it. I'll give you an example—*The Merry Men.* There I began with the feeling of one of those islands on the west coast of Scotland, and I gradually developed the story to express the sentiment with which the coast affected me." *Kidnapped* originated in a similar manner. One imagines that out of Thomas Hardy's feeling for Egdon Heath, a stretch of wild moorland near his home in Dorsetshire, developed the story of *The Return of the Native,* because the story itself is so full of that feeling.

(4) *Starting from an idea.* The germ of a narrative may lie in some general statement about life, in a theory of human conduct, in some problem of social or domestic relations, and so on. In such a case the "moral" does not grow out of the story, but the story grows out of the "moral." The narrative is written to express an abstract idea in a concrete narrative form. Thus one of Ibsen's plays, *A Doll's House,* originated in ideas as abstract as these:

> There are two kinds of spiritual law, two kinds of conscience, one in man, and another, altogether different, in woman. They do not understand each other; but in practical life the woman is judged by man's law, as though she were not a woman but a man.
>
> The wife in the play ends by having no idea of what is right or wrong; natural feeling on the one hand and belief in authority on the other have altogether bewildered her.
>
> A woman cannot be herself in the society of the present day, which is an exclusively masculine society, with laws framed by men and with a judicial system that judges feminine conduct from a masculine point of view.[1]

We can hardly call these preliminary notes for the play a plot; plot comes later as a result of the endeavor to work out these ideas concretely through incidents in the lives of men and women. In Hawthorne's *American Note Books* occurs the following entry, written in 1837:

[1] *Chips from Ibsen's Workshop,* quoted by Baker, *Dramatic Technique.*

A person to be in the possession of something as perfect as mortal man has a right to demand; he tries to make it better, and ruins it entirely.

Out of that abstract idea developed "The Birthmark." But the story grew slowly, for two years later he had gone only thus far with it:

A person to be the death of his beloved in trying to raise her to more than mortal perfection; yet this should be a comfort to him for having aimed so highly and holily.

Before Hawthorne had a story he needed to ask and answer such questions as these: What kind of man would demand more than "mortal perfection" in his beloved? What was the defect he tried to remedy? Why did she allow him to make the attempt? Under what circumstances was the attempt made? In order to evolve a story out of an idea we must ask ourselves such specific questions and find plausible answers to them.

EXERCISES

1. Write a brief narrative based on personal experience. The following topics may help to suggest a subject:

(*a*) How I earned my first money.
(*b*) My narrowest escape from death.
(*c*) The bravest act I ever saw.
(*d*) An incident that occurred while I was learning to run an automobile (or ride a horse, or milk a cow, or sail a boat, or paddle a canoe, etc.).
(*e*) The night before the Fourth.
(*f*) A vacation adventure.
(*g*) Outwitting the Sophomores.
(*h*) Finding a roommate.
(*i*) Helping to make a touchdown.
(*j*) The first time I ever tried to cook.
(*k*) Getting dressed for the party.
(*l*) A practical joke.
(*m*) A strange coincidence.

2. Give an account of some historical event or incident which has interested you. Use only a few details of setting, but try to make these count.

3. Tell the story of some recent college happening at which you were not present. Get your facts from spectators and, if possible, from participants. Members of the class who have a first-hand knowledge of the subject should criticize your account with these points in mind: (i) accuracy of statement; (ii) correct sequence of events; (iii) inclusion of all the important facts.

4. Expand one of the following actions into a readable narrative:

(*a*) A college student determines to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth for one day.

(*b*) A sub-freshman buys one of the best seats in chapel at a great bargain.

(*c*) A peddler is traveling through a farming district selling patent clothes-horses. He hears that there is to be a wedding in the neighborhood, and persuades about a dozen families to buy clothes-horses as a present for the bride, each family keeping its purchase a secret from the neighbors until all arrive at the bride's house on the night of the wedding.

(*d*) The captain of the X varsity football team intentionally defeats his own team in the most important game of the season by playing off-side at critical moments.

(*e*) A woman and child, cut off by flames from reaching the stairs or fire-escape of a burning building, are rescued by firemen.

(*f*) A student finds a proof-sheet of an examination which he must pass in order to remain in college. After a struggle with himself he decides to take no unfair advantage.

5. Devise incidents to illustrate the character of one of the following persons. After discussion and comparison of results in class, try to work out the synopsis of a narrative which has one of these characters as a leading figure:

(*a*) A mischievous little boy.

(*b*) A self-satisfied little girl.

(*c*) A soldier who can be absolutely relied on to do exactly as he is told, who never flinches at danger, but never shows any initiative or enterprise even when such qualities are most needed.

(*d*) An old man, shrewd and tricky, no more honest than the law requires, and a firm believer in spiritualism.

(*e*) An old woman who always suspects the worst, delights in gossip, and thinks too much about her half-imaginary aches and "symptoms."

(*f*) A college student, exceptionally good-natured, always "hard up," excessively lazy, ingenious in avoiding work of any kind, successful in hoodwinking the faculty.

6. Outline for class discussion the plot of a story which embodies one of the following ideas:

(*a*) Circumstantial evidence may convince even an innocent person's friends of his guilt.

(*b*) A person may be his own worst enemy.

(*c*) "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise."

(*d*) "The very honey of all earthly joy
Does of all meats the soonest cloy."

(*e*) A talented and capable person may fail through lack of confidence in his ability.

(*f*) "Only the brave deserve the fair."

(*g*) Patience is not always a virtue.

(*h*) "With heart that's ever kind,
With gentle spirit gay,
You've spring perennial in your mind
And round you make a May."

7. Try to find in your neighborhood a setting that suggests to you interesting action of some kind. Make notes of the most important features of the setting and of the action, and report orally to the class.

8. Report to the class (orally or in writing, according to your instructor's directions) the questions you should ask and answer in order to make a satisfying narrative out of the material given in the following dispatch to a newspaper. Be as specific as possible.

PARIS, June 26.—Lost thirteen months ago, a pearl necklace valued at $30,000 and owned by an American woman whose name was not revealed, today was returned to the Paris police. When the necklace disappeared, the owner, who was just about

to return to the United States, notified the police, and during the interval the insurance companies made payment in full for the loss.

This morning a young woman informed the police that she had found the necklace, but for more than a year had been unable to make up her mind to return it. Finally her conscience won the long battle.

III. Management of the Action

Unity. Unity is fundamental to good narrative. So far as the action alone is concerned unity is secured chiefly by knowing where to begin, where to end, and what to leave out. That is, in the first place, we should have a recognizable narrative topic, just as we should have a central idea in exposition or a definite question in argument. It is not always possible to put this topic into a statement, nor is it necessary to do so. But we should at least feel it if we are to do our best work. Otherwise our narratives are apt to become aimless and wandering, like the conversation of Lady Asher in "Mr. Gilfil's Love-Story." In very brief narratives pointless wandering is at once apparent:

"I remember poor Byron, Hobhouse, Trelawney, and myself, dining with Cardinal Mezzocaldo at Rome," Captain Sumph began, "and we had some Orvieto wine for dinner, which Byron liked very much. And I remember how the Cardinal regretted that he was a single man. We went to Civita Vecchia two days afterwards, where Byron's yacht was—and, by Jove, the Cardinal died within three weeks; and Byron was very sorry, for he rather liked him."

"A devilish interesting story, Sumph, indeed," Wagg said.[1]

But in longer accounts will not mere bulk shield us? Some writers seem to think so, but they are apt to be tedious. Even for a great writer, a marked digression will prove

[1]Thackeray, *Pendennis*.

dangerous. What reader of *Tom Jones* has not felt the chapters on the Man of the Hill to be a blot on an intensely interesting narrative? Forming a separate story imbedded in the novel, they break its continuity and exasperate the reader. The fault appears in history and biography as well as in fiction. The historian is tempted to set forth his hard-won knowledge even when it does not bear on the subject of his history; and it is, as G. K. Chesterton declares in his *Robert Browning*, "the sin and snare of biographers that they tend to see significance in everything; characteristic carelessness if their hero drops his pipe, and characteristic carefulness if he picks it up again." Whether the narrative be long or short, concentration upon the topic makes for intensity and power.

A distinct narrative theme helps us to overcome many of the difficulties of selecting material. In some instances, well within the range of ordinary student composition, such as records of personal experiences and autobiographical and biographical sketches, the very abundance of material makes selection difficult for the inexperienced writer. A complete record of a single day in the life of an average person might very probably fill a fair-sized volume. Consequently, it is all too easy for a writer who does not keep his narrative topic steadily in mind to get lost among the details. The advantage of adhering to a definite narrative theme is illustrated by the example that follows. The members of a class in composition were asked to write a biographical sketch (real or imaginary) approximately one thousand words in length. They were told not to attempt a complete survey of the lives of their subjects, but rather to concentrate on some marked trait or characteristic. The author of " 'Hick'ry' Shepherd," the sketch printed on the following pages, heeded this advice and greatly simplified his problem of selection:

"Hick'ry" Shepherd

Joel Shepherd was as normal a boy as there ever had been. He had grown up and worked on his father's farm, had gone to country school, and at the age of twenty-two had fallen enough in love to be engaged to Mary Pussey, a pretty, common-sense girl, the daughter of a neighboring farmer. But all that was before his accident—and before he came to be known as "Hick'ry" Shepherd in the whole community and for miles around.

It all happened one night when he was driving over to the Pusseys' with his horse and buggy. He was late that evening, as he had to wait at the carriage shop for old Jeff Hires to put a new wheel on the buggy in place of the one that some mischievous spirits had removed on Hallowe'en, the night before.

"I'd ruther ye'd wait till I get ye a good hick'ry wheel, Joel," the carriage-maker had said. "The unly one I got here is thet'n over thar, off'n Joe Turner's old kerridge, an' the spokes are pine an' brittle as punk. God unly knows why a feller 'ud use pine for a wagon wheel . . ."

"Well, let me have it, anyway," the boy had cut him off. "I've simply got to have it tonight."

And so it was that when, on his way to the Pusseys', his horse tramped on a copperhead snake in the road and started down Penny's Hill at full gallop, lifting the buggy a foot off the ground at every break, the old pine wheel crashed in suddenly like the "one hoss shay," and threw Joel head-foremost into the ditch and fractured his skull.

When he first began to regain consciousness late the next afternoon he found himself in the big four-poster bed in the "spare" room at the Pusseys', where he had been brought the night before, as the nearest place to the scene of the accident. At his bedside were Mary Pussey, and his father and mother, and the doctor, all of whom perceptibly gave a breath of relief when he opened his eyes. But never a glance did he give to them. He rolled over until he could touch the bedpost nearest him, and muttered something that sounded like, "Ain't hick'ry . . . 'tain't safe," and lapsed back into unconsciousness.

Weeks passed before the boy was able to be up and around again, but when he at last was able, he seemed to be the same Joel Shepherd he had always been. Shortly afterwards he and Mary Pussey

were married, and they settled down at the Shepherd homestead to take over the management of the farm.

It was the third week after they had been married that the new Mrs. Shepherd first noticed something peculiar in her husband. For a week or more it had been warm enough to do without a fire in the living room, and during the busy spring days Joel had neglected to cut a fresh supply of firewood. But this day was muggy and damp—one on which a fire in the chuck stove after supper would be welcome to a man tired out by a hard day's work So, in the late afternoon, his wife went out to the woodshed and sawed off and split up several chunks from a limb piece standing in the corner, and soon had a splendid fire going in the living room. When supper was over and the dishes were washed, the two sat down before the fire together to talk, as newly married people do, of life and plans and future; and Joel had promised her a new porch, and new paint for the house, and some ground from one of the fields for a flower bed, when he glanced toward the spare chuck or two behind the stove.

The happy, indulgent smile froze on his face. "You burn my hickory? You *burn* it?" he cried, in a voice of mixed rage and grief. He started up trembling, and with a stony gaze at his wife and an arm outstretched toward the firewood, backed away toward the door and plodded upstairs to bed.

In the morning he was the calm and indulgent husband again; but always afterwards there was a supply of less valuable wood in the kitchen, and the hickory woodshed was henceforward locked, save when there was a carpentry job at hand. Then, if it was a new handle for the butcher-knife, he would go into the woodhouse and cut and whittle it out from a hickory stick, and when it was done, would hand it gravely to his wife with the remark, "There! That's a safe job. That's hickory!" In the course of time, as a door sill rotted or a latch was broken, the new sill and the new latch had to be made of hickory, as did the chicken-coops and fence-posts. And when it came to the new porch, he must spend twice as much as anyone else thought necessary, simply that every post and floorboard, and every step and sleeper should be of hickory.

When he became school director, and the new school was to be erected he saw that it was built of hickory, decorated with hickory, and filled with hickory desks and chairs, so that "it would last forever." And every bridge that was built by the supervisors of

the township for ten years was constructed of hickory to please Shepherd's whim, until a lumber company that handled other kinds of lumber found itself without a bit of public business, and actively worked for the defeat of "Hick'ry" Shepherd at the next election.

It was in this way that Joel Shepherd became "Hick'ry" Shepherd, and remained so until his death. He had ordered in his will that he should be buried in a hickory coffin, and this provision was duly carried out.

But strangest of all, a month or two after his death, when the sod was just beginning to take root over his grave, there sprang up just behind the tombstone in the little old Harmersville graveyard, a slender shoot of green. And today there stands above the grave a magnificent hickory tree, which embraces with its roots on either side a fragment of tombstone, and draws up nourishment from mold within a hickory coffin.[1]

The "exposition." Most narratives require some "exposition"—that is, a setting forth of antecedent events, or an introduction to certain of the characters, or an explanation of the situation or circumstances, or a statement of scope or purpose, as the case may be. For the sake of illustration the exposition in the following anecdote is printed in italics:

I was with Porter at the Twenty-sixth Street place one afternoon when a batch of mail was brought to him. One of the envelopes caught his eye. On the envelope was printed the name of one of the leading fiction publications in all the world, if not indeed the most important of them all. *Many times during the years when he had been struggling for a foothold as a writer of short stories he had submitted his tales, including the best of them, to the editor of this publication. Always had they come back with the conventional printed slip. When he reached the topmost rung of the ladder he meticulously refrained from submitting anything to that particular publication, the writers for which comprised the leading "names" in the world of fiction.*

[1]The writer stated that his narrative was based on fact, or what passed for fact among his "Harmersville" acquaintances, only the dialogue and a few minor details being of his own invention.

He ripped open this envelope, which attracted his eye. There was a note and a check for $1000. The note asked him briefly for something from his pen—anything—with that word underscored—check for which was therewith inclosed. If the thousand dollars were not deemed sufficient, the note went on, he had only to name what sum he considered fair and the additional amount would be remitted to him.

Porter, who probably was the least vainglorious writer of equal fame who ever lived, smiled a sort of cherubic smile as he passed the note over to me. When I had finished reading it, without comment, he, saying never a word, addressed an envelope to the editor, slipped the check into it and went out into the hall and deposited it in the drop. Not a word passed between us about the offer.[1]

It is evident that if the exposition were omitted from this brief narrative, the anecdote would lose most of its point as an illustration of a certain trait of O. Henry's character and that readers would not understand what lay behind his unusual action.

Other things being equal, the briefer the exposition is, the better. If only a word or two is required, the beginning is often the best place for it, as in the following example:

Before beginning the relation of the following incidents, I wish to state that I am a young married man, doing business in a large city, in the suburbs of which I live.

I was going into town the other morning, when my wife handed me a little piece of red calico, and asked if I would have time, during the day, to buy two yards and a half of calico like it. I assured her that it would be no trouble at all, and putting the piece of calico in my pocket, I took the train for the city.

At lunch-time I stopped in at a large drygoods store to attend to my wife's commission . . .[2]

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[1]New York *Sun*, January 10, 1915. Quoted in C. A. Smith's *O. Henry: A Biography* (slightly emended).

[2]Frank R. Stockton, "A Piece of Red Calico."

If the exposition is more complex, it may be a better plan to bring it in bit by bit as it is needed. Study the artful way the required explanations are woven into the texture of Shakespeare's *Othello*. Only the critic in the audience will be aware that in the scene in which Othello defends himself against Brabantio's charge, the defense itself is necessary exposition. Artlessly or carelessly used, however, this method of handling the exposition recalls the clumsiness of the unskilled narrator who is continually forced to say "I forgot to tell you at the beginning," or "I ought to have told you before." Another method, frequently used in short stories, is to follow the classic rule for epic poetry and plunge into the midst of the narrative (*in medias res*), letting the exposition wait until the narrative is well started. Milton's *Paradise Lost* furnishes us with a well-known example of this method employed on a large scale. The narrative begins with Satan and his followers in Hell, and it is not until long afterwards that the events which brought them there are fully related. Both of these methods have the advantage of affording striking or lively beginnings.

Effective beginnings. Dull openings are discouraging to a reader, and are usually unnecessary. In short narratives especially, the beginnings should not be allowed to drag. Effort spent in getting brief tales started quickly is well spent. We can learn much by observing the ways in which successful modern story-tellers arrest and hold attention at the very start. Thus Kipling, in "The Mutiny of the Mavericks," arouses curiosity by a cryptic statement:

> When three obscure gentlemen in San Francisco argued on insufficient premises, they condemned a fellow-creature to a most unpleasant death in a far country which had nothing whatever to do with the United States.

O. Henry commences a story frequently with a kind of generalized comment on what is to follow, which stimulates the reader's anticipation:

> There is a saying that no man has tasted the full flavor of life until he has known poverty, love, and war. . . .
>
> It seems that the wise executive power that rules life has thought best to drill man in these three conditions; and none may escape all three. In rural places the terms do not mean so much. . . . It is in the cities that our epigram gains in truth and vigor; and it has remained for one John Hopkins to crowd the experience into a rather small space of time.[1]

An effective method of gaining immediate interest is to set forth briefly a situation which promises interesting developments, as does this opening paragraph of one of Miss Wilkins's stories:

> Two o'clock had been the hour set for the wedding. It was now four, and the bridegroom had not yet appeared. The relatives who had been bidden to the festivities had been waiting impatiently in the two square front rooms of Maria Caldwell's house, but now some had straggled out into the front yard, from which they could look up the road to better advantage.[2]

Dialogue often makes a lively beginning. The very appearance of dialogue is enticing to many readers; and if it is interesting in itself and has a direct bearing on the subject of the narrative, it carries one on into the story very agreeably:

> "What I want you to do," said Mr. George Wright, as he leaned toward the old sailor, "is to be an uncle to me."
>
> "Aye, aye," said the mystified Mr. Kemp, pausing with a mug of beer midway to his lips.
>
> "A *rich* uncle," continued the young man, lowering his voice to prevent any keen ears in the next bar from acquiring useless knowl-

[1] "The Complete Life of John Hopkins."
[2] "A Conquest of Humility."

edge. "An uncle from New Zealand, who is going to leave me all 'is money."

"Where's it coming from?" demanded Mr. Kemp, with a little excitement.

"It ain't coming," was the reply. "You've only got to say you've got it."[1]

It is easy to make these devices crude and bungling, or utterly artificial. We have all, probably, met the type of story which begins with a few lines of thrilling conversation and then goes on with an elaborate description of the scene and the speakers and the situation while the broken conversation hangs in mid-air. Here a little knowledge proves dangerous. If a writer cannot achieve the art to conceal his art, he should fall back upon a plain, matter-of-fact opening:

One evening in Algeria, at the close of a day's hunting, a violent storm surprised me on the plain of Chelif, at some leagues from Orleansville. Nowhere the shade of a village or even of a caravansary in sight. Nothing but dwarf-palms, lentisk-thickets, and great stretches of plow-land reaching as far as eye could see. Moreover, the Chelif, swollen by the shower, had begun to rise in an alarming fashion, and I stood in some danger of passing the night out in a swamp. Fortunately, the civil-interpreter of the Bureau at Milianah, who accompanied me, chanced to remember that quite near us, hidden by a slight elevation, there was a tribe whose aga he knew, and we decided to go thither, and throw ourselves upon his hospitality for a night.[2]

We can also learn much from the practice of the competent newspaper reporter. The usual procedure in a news account is to give in the opening sentences or paragraphs —according to the length of the article—the gist of the story, or its most important or most striking features.

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[1]W. W. Jacobs, "The Old Man of the Sea."
[2]Alphonse Daudet, "Decorated the Fifteenth of August."

In other words, whatever gives the article its chief value as news is put first. This method enables the hurried reader to obtain a summary of the day's news and is of great advantage in making up the paper for publication because, when the demands for space are pressing, the latter part of an article may be lopped off without destroying the essential news value of the article. At first thought it might seem that this summarizing method of beginning a narrative would cause us to stop reading when we came to the end of the "lead," as the beginning of a news story is called. We do stop, of course, if the subject-matter has no inherent interest for us, or if the reporter fails to give us any hint of interesting details to follow. But if the subject-matter is at all interesting to us, a good "lead" whets our curiosity for a more detailed account of the happening. Such a beginning as the following, for instance, would without doubt arouse the interest of many of us:

> Henrico Capelo, who lives at West Street and Sea View Avenue, Coney Island, went to North Elm Street and Mermaid Avenue at 3 A. M. yesterday to serenade a young woman of his acquaintance and did so with such earnestness that it began to rain flower pots, brickbats, and week-day shoes in his vicinity.
>
> The high-strung and romantic Mr. Capelo became indignant, drew a revolver and fired five shots, seriously wounding Marcuso Darrao, who was two blocks from the scene of the serenade. . . .

The use of the preliminary summary is not confined to newspaper stories; the method is applicable to any narrative which does not depend for some part of its interest upon curiosity or suspense concerning the outcome of events. To "give away" the plot of the average short story or novel at the beginning would dull the reader's interest; but when the events recounted are matters of public record, as in the example that follows, or are more or less

generally known, concealment of the outcome is unnecessary:

Someone has said that the death of Sir John Franklin did more to add to our knowledge of the Polar regions than had been accomplished by his life. His strange disappearance amid the Arctic wastes was the signal for a remarkable series of attempts to penetrate into the icebound territory around the North Pole with the view of discovering the fate of the brave explorer and, if not too late, of rescuing him and his gallant crews from the deadly grip of the frozen land. As the Crusades of the Middle Ages had roused the Christian knights to fight for the recovery of Jerusalem from the hands of the infidels, so did the tragic mystery of the *Erebus* and the *Terror* kindle into a burning flame the chivalrous enthusiasm of Great Britain and America, and lead to the dispatch of expedition after expedition into the hidden wonderlands of snow and ice.

A spirit of heroic daring and courage characterized all these expeditions; but the story of one of them, that led by Dr. Elisha Kent Kane, of America, deserves more than a passing reference. In all the literature of Polar exploration and adventure there is little to compare with the record of suffering and endurance set forth in the journal of the heroic commander. For twenty-one months the vessel containing the search party was firmly locked in the very jaws of death. Provisions ran short, scurvy and other diseases attacked the crew, again and again accidents happened which threatened the life of all the expedition, for weeks and months on end starvation stared every one in the face, and it seemed as if there could be no escape from the vast network of cruel circumstances. But amid it all Kane's marvelous confidence in ultimate relief never wavered. He hoped on when everyone else was resigned to death, and eventually led his diminished band back to civilization across a stretch of ice and water for thirteen hundred miles, after their vessel, no longer of service to them, had been abandoned to its fate.[1]

We read on to obtain the concrete details of a story of fortitude and courage.

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[1] J. K. Maclean, *Heroes of the Polar Seas.*

Forward movement. Narration implies movement, and this movement should usually be forward. An occasional frolicsome book like Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* may move backward, and stories which begin in the middle must return sooner or later to the beginning; but narratives in general should perceptibly go ahead. Unless it is handled with exceptional skill the story that drags or rotates courts yawns from the reader. Forward movement is easiest to maintain when the narrative consists of a single chain of events or the experiences of but one person. In more complex narratives the writer must keep the various parts moving onward as nearly as possible in time with one another, as the juggler keeps several plates spinning on the table at once. This is hard to do, especially if the narrative includes several sets of characters or trains of events which touch only occasionally, as in histories of nations, in complicated novels like *Vanity Fair* and *David Copperfield*, and in plays with sub-plots like *King Lear* and *The Merchant of Venice*. With such difficulties, however, we have little to do; our main purpose is to learn the management of plain, straightforward narrative.

As regards movement, simple narratives fall into two classes. In the first of these classes the chronological sequence is unbroken from the beginning to the end. The narrative commences with the first link, in point of time, in the chain of action and goes on to treat each happening thereafter in the order in which it occurred. Examples are " 'Hick'ry' Shepherd" (page 306) and "The Death of the Dauphin" (page 320). The second class of narratives consists of those in which the actual time-sequence is broken at one or more points. The writer carries us forward to a certain point in his story and then returns to events that took place earlier in the actual order of happening. A typical example follows:

Bandit Murders Jeweler Seeking to Aid Grandson

Joseph Liberchein, sixty-two years old, was shot through the heart by a hold-up man early last evening in his jewelry store at 35 Graham Avenue, Brooklyn, when he sprang to assist his grandson, sixteen years old, who was screaming beneath the blows dealt him by another bandit.

The driver of the bandit's motor car, believed to be James McNiff, of Pacific Street, Brooklyn, was captured after a chase of five miles through Brooklyn streets, during which a pursuing policeman fired several shots, one of which struck the fugitive in the groin. His two companions escaped unnoticed during the chase.

Liberchein and his son-in-law, Harold Finkelstein, were the proprietors of the jewelry store, the firm name being Liberchein & Finkelstein.

At 7 o'clock the old man was seated just inside of his store, as was his custom on pleasant summer evenings, staring out approvingly at the bustle in the crowded street. Finkelstein and the latter's son, Sidney, sixteen years old, were behind the counter, waiting on five customers, three of whom were women.

A Hudson touring car drew up at the curb. The three men who were in it got out. The old man in the doorway scanned them curiously through the smoke of his cigarette. They did not look like customers to him apparently, for he made no move to rise or to make room for them to enter.

Stumbling against his feet and cursing him for a fool, two of the men rushed into the store, drawing revolvers as they came. The third remained in front of the store.

"Hands up!" called one of the two who entered.

The other began herding the panic-stricken customers into the rear of the shop. Finkelstein and his son dropped flat on the floor.

The second gunman leaped nimbly over the counter and began to beat the prostrate man and boy about the head with the butt of his revolver. Sydney's shrieks of pain and fright aroused his grandfather, who had sat motionless in his chair—so still that the ash did not fall from his cigarette.

Casting the cigarette aside, he rushed for the man who was beating his grandson. Before he had gone three paces the gunman who was holding the customers at bay turned with a snarl

and fired point blank at him. The bullet struck the old man in the heart and he dropped dead.

Without pausing for plunder, the two robbers took to their heels, menacing with their weapons the knot of men and women that had gathered on the sidewalk peering fearsomely into the smoke-filled interior of the jewelry shop. Several of them, who had run from a lunchroom next door, carried napkins in their hands.

Jumping into the automobile, to whose wheel the man left outside as lookout had already sprung, the two men fired a single shot back at the throng on the sidewalk, which now was surging toward them. At the same moment the automobile leaped forward as the driver let in the clutch. The sudden start spoiled the aim of the gun man. His bullet went far above the heads of those on the sidewalk, shattered a window of the jewelry shop, and spattered itself against the wall.

The bandits' car sped west through Cook Street, the yelling of the pursuing crowd growing faint as it gathered speed. Four or five taxicabs, a motor-truck, a light delivery truck, and other vehicles set out in pursuit, however, and their drivers kept the touring car in sight.

The pursuers were honking their horns and waving their arms as they sped after the robbers, who no longer turned to fire upon them, but bent every energy upon escape. Patrolman George D. Maher, on traffic duty at Hayward Street, to which the bandits fled, heard the uproar, drew his revolver, and fired as the fugitive car passed him.

That was the only shot fired during the chase and must have been the one which inflicted what is thought to be a mortal wound on the driver. Nevertheless, he did not slacken his pace, but stuck to his wheel with his foot pressing on the accelerator.

Behind him more than a score of automobiles roared in pursuit, their number growing rapidly as the chase led along Bedford Avenue and then down Flushing Avenue toward downtown Brooklyn. On the running board of the leading taxicab, driven by Otto E. Walgelein, of 53 Lynch Street, Brooklyn, crouched Patrolman Maher, revolver in hand, but afraid to shoot because of the crowded thoroughfare chosen by the bandits as their avenue of escape.

Within the taxicab, bouncing and bewildered, rode John Chester Brandt, of 55 Dittman Street, Brooklyn, who had en-

gaged the vehicle for a peaceful errand and could not understand what all the excitement was about.

Through five miles of crowded streets the chase led, ending at last at Hudson and Myrtle avenues, in downtown Brooklyn, only a few blocks from Borough Hall on the one hand, and the theater, shopping, and restaurant district on the other.

There Walgelein managed to bring his taxi abreast of the fleeing motor car and locked their wheels so that both lurched suddenly into the curb. The sudden stop threw the unfortunate Mr. Brandt straight through the open window of the taxi and into the lap of the driver of the touring car.

When he had been extricated it was found that the touring car was empty save for the wounded driver. He was taken to Cumberland Street Hospital and is in serious condition. His companions are believed to have slipped out of the car during the chase.[1]

The narrative begins with the shooting of the old man and continues with a rapid summary that covers the entire episode in two short paragraphs. The third paragraph consists of exposition that introduces the detailed account In the fourth paragraph the narrative turns back to events that preceded the murder, and without any further break in the chronological sequence moves on steadily to the end of the action. The narrative as a whole has distinct forward movement because throughout the greater part of it the actual time order is carefully preserved. Observe how clearly the simultaneous actions of the various persons engaged—the two bandits in the store, their companion on the sidewalk, the father and son behind the counter, the old man—are kept moving along together.

Forward movement does not necessarily involve continuous movement or movement at the same rate of speed. Only in short narratives dealing with a single event or situation is the action likely to be strictly continuous and uniform: Hawthorne's "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" and

[1]The New York *Herald Tribune*, June 18, 1925.

Poe's "The Cask of Amontillado" are examples of continuous action moving at a uniform rate. In a majority of narratives masses of details not relevant to the purpose in hand are omitted. Thus Hardy, in *The Trumpet Major*, briefly dismisses a period of over three months:

> Christmas had passed. Dreary winter with dark evenings had given place to more dreary winter with light evenings. Rapid thaws had ended in rain, rain in wind, wind in dust. Showery days had come—the season of pink dawns and white sunsets; and people hoped that the March weather was over.

And yet in the same book he devotes an entire chapter to a chance meeting or to an evening party. In de Maupassant's "The Necklace" (page 665) the events of ten years are summarized in twenty lines, though a five minutes' conversation has previously been treated in twice that number. An examination of the passage of actual time in the average story or history will show that the narrative is presented in blocks or masses, while intervening periods are either briefly dismissed or entirely ignored. That a skillful writer lingers over certain portions of his narrative and hurries over others is shown by a glance at the time-scheme of Hawthorne's "Wakefield." The story covers a period of twenty years and consists of sixteen paragraphs in all; the first three paragraphs are taken up with introductory material, and the last paragraph is a philosophical comment on the story as a whole.

Paragraphs	Time Elapsed
4th, 5th, and 6th	First evening
7th and 8th	First morning
9th	Six or seven weeks
10th	Ten years
11th and 12th	About one hour
13th and 14th	Ten years
15th	A few moments

Climax. In addition to forward movement, there is in most good narrative an upward movement. The action should, so far as possible, always be tending toward some crowning event, some goal that the reader grows more and more eager to reach. This upward movement is called climax. Two familiar types of current fiction, the detective-story and the conventional love-story, give us simple illustrations of climactic movement. In the detective story the highest point of interest is commonly the solution of the mystery. This solution belongs at the end of the story, being the objective toward which most of the interest is directed. If the mystery were solved in the beginning or in the middle of the story, at least half of the interest would be gone. In the conventional love-story the point of highest interest is the marriage of the lovers. That is why love-stories generally end at or near the altar. A happy wedding that puts an end to the doubts and fears of the hero and heroine is really the crowning event of the story. Climactic movement in a short narrative is illustrated by the following sketch from Alphonse Daudet's *Letters from My Mill:*

THE DEATH OF THE DAUPHIN

The little Dauphin is sick; the little Dauphin is going to die. In all the churches of the realm the Blessed Sacrament is exposed night and day, and tall candles are burning for the recovery of the royal child. The streets in the old residence are sad and silent, the bells no longer ring, the carriages go at a foot-pace. About the palace the curious citizens watch through the iron grills the porters with gilt paunches talking in the courtyards with an air of importance.

The whole chateau is in commotion. Chamberlains, majordomos, run hastily up and down the marble staircases. The galleries are full of pages and courtiers in silk garments, who go from group to group asking news in undertones. On the broad steps weeping maids of honor greet one another with low courtesies, wiping their eyes with pretty embroidered handkerchiefs.

In the orangery there is a great assemblage of long-robed doctors. Through the windows they can be seen flourishing their long black sleeves and bending majestically their hammer-like wigs. The little Dauphin's governor and equerry walk back and forth before the door, awaiting the decision of the faculty. Scullions pass them by without saluting them. The equerry swears like a heathen, the governor recites lines from Horace. And meanwhile, in the direction of the stables one hears a long, plaintive neigh. It is the little Dauphin's horse, calling sadly from his empty manger.

And the king? Where is monseigneur the king? The king is all alone in a room at the end of the chateau. Majesties do not like to be seen weeping. As for the queen, that is a different matter. Seated at the little Dauphin's pillow, her lovely face is bathed in tears, and she sobs aloud before them all, as a linen-draper's wife might do.

In his lace-bedecked crib the little Dauphin, whiter than the cushions upon which he lies, is resting now with closed eyes. They think that he sleeps; but no. The little Dauphin is not asleep. He turns to his mother, and seeing that she is weeping, he says to her:

"Madame queen, why do you weep? Is it because you really believe that I am going to die?"

The queen tries to reply. Sobs prevent her from speaking.

"Pray do not weep, madame queen; you forget that I am the Dauphin, and that dauphins cannot die like this."

The queen sobs more bitterly than ever, and the little Dauphin begins to be alarmed.

"I say," he says, "I don't want Death to come and take me, and I will find a way to prevent his coming here. Let them send at once forty very strong troopers to stand guard around our bed! Let a hundred big guns watch night and day, with matches lighted, under our windows! And woe to Death if it dares approach us!"

To please the royal child the queen makes a sign. In a moment they hear the big guns rumbling through the courtyard; and forty tall troopers, halberds in hand, take their places about the room. They are all old soldiers with gray mustaches. The little Dauphin claps his hands when he sees them. He recognizes one of them and calls him:

"Lorrain! Lorrain!"

The soldier steps forward toward the bed.

"I love you dearly, my old Lorrain. Let me see your big sword. If Death tries to take me you must kill him, won't you?"

"Yes, monseigneur," Lorrain replies. And two great tears roll down his bronzed cheeks.

At that moment the chaplain approaches the little Dauphin and talks with him for a long time in a low voice, showing him the crucifix. The little Dauphin listens with an expression of great surprise, then, abruptly interrupting him, he says:

"I understand what you say, monsieur l'abbé; but tell me, couldn't my little friend Beppo die in my place, if I gave him a lot of money?"

The chaplain continues to speak in a low voice, and the little Dauphin's expression becomes more and more astonished.

When the chaplain has finished, the little Dauphin replies with a deep sigh:

"All this that you tell me is very sad, monsieur l'abbé; but one thing consoles me, and that is that up yonder, in the paradise of the stars, I shall still be the Dauphin. I know that the good Lord is my cousin, and that He cannot fail to treat me according to my rank."

Then he adds, turning to his mother:

"Let them bring me my richest clothes, my doublet of white ermine and my velvet slippers! I wish to make myself handsome for the angels, and to enter paradise in the costume of a Dauphin."

A third time the chaplain leans toward the little Dauphin and talks to him for a long time in a low voice. In the midst of his harangue, the royal child angrily interrupts:

"Why then, to be Dauphin is to be nothing at all!"

And, refusing to listen to anything more, the little Dauphin turns toward the wall and weeps bitterly.

A narrative that moves toward a single definitely marked point of highest interest, as does "The Death of the Dauphin," has a great advantage. The interest of such a composition grows steadily more intense as the action proceeds. Naturally then, we should try to attain the effect of the single climax whenever it seems possible. But some kinds of narrative material do not lend themselves readily to such an arrangement, while other kinds put insuperable obstacles in the way of a single unified climactic movement.

Biographies and histories, for instance, cannot always be written with a single grand climax in view. The life of an individual or of a nation commonly has its ups and downs —a succession of climaxes. The history of England is a case in point: events move onward to a culmination in the completion of the Norman Conquest, say; to another culmination in the defeat of the Spanish Armada; to another in the establishment of the Commonwealth; to another in the accession of William and Mary; and so on. It is possible, of course, for a writer so to limit the scope of his work that he obtains a movement which tends toward one crowning event, but there often comes a point where any additional lopping away of the material would result in losses too great to be balanced by the advantage of a single climactic movement. Even a relatively short narrative may have more than one climax without serious loss of interest. The story of the Brooklyn bandits furnishes an example. Beginning with the fourth paragraph, the story has climactic movement ending with the murder of the old man. From that event on to the end comes a second climactic movement which culminates in the capture of the wounded bandit. A sensible writer will accordingly seek a single climax whenever possible; and when it is not possible, he will try to make each episode or part of his narrative climactic in itself.

EXERCISES

1. What is the narrative topic of "The Death of the Dauphin" (page 320)?

2. What is the narrative topic of "The Necklace" (page 665)?

3. Write an autobiographical sketch which has for its central idea the development or illustration of one of your most marked characteristics.

4. Write a biographical sketch of some person who interests you, limiting your treatment as far as possible to a single trait of character.

5. Point out the exposition in "The Death of the Dauphin" (page 320).

6. Point out the exposition in "The Necklace" (page 665).

7. Where would you begin?—supposing you were to tell the story of (*a*) the most important football game of the season at your college, (*b*) the defense of the Alamo, (*c*) the death of Stonewall Jackson, (*d*) the battle of Saratoga, (*e*) the treachery of Benedict Arnold, (*f*) the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, (*g*) the sinking of the *Lusitania*.

8. Write a new beginning for "'Hick'ry' Shepherd" (page 306) which will carry the reader at once into the midst of the narrative. Continue your rewriting just beyond the point where you turn back to pick up the earlier portions of the narrative.

9. Write a "lead" for a newspaper account of some recent college happening.

10. Use the main facts of "In the Polar Sea" (page 642) as the basis of a newspaper account.

11. Among the narratives printed in this chapter find one in which the action is continuous and the passage of time is fairly uniform.

12. Analyze in detail the passage of time in "'Hick'ry' Shepherd" (page 306).

13. Does the quotation from *Typee* (page 290) contain a climax?

14. For an example of simple narrative with climax, read 2 Samuel, xviii. From verse 24 onward note the suspense. What do you consider the reason for the introduction of the watchmen?

15. Rewrite the story of the hold-up (page 316) so that it has a single climax, the "crowning event" being the shooting of Liberchein. Omit the "lead." If further details seem to you necessary to make the climax more effective, supply them from your own imagination.

IV. Characterization

Methods. The methods of characterization correspond pretty closely to the methods by which we determine the characters of the people we know. We form our opinions of people by their appearance, by their environment and associations, by what others say of them, and by their words and deeds. Piecing together bits of this outward evidence, we construct for ourselves an idea of the inward nature of our acquaintances. All these means of characterization are used in narration.

Direct presentation. Let us look at an instance of actual characterization—the portrait of Tybalt, a minor personage in *Romeo and Juliet*. When he first arrives upon the scene (Act I, Scene i) he shows immediately his violent temper and love of fighting. Benvolio has drawn his sword merely to put an end to a disturbance among some servants. He explains this clearly and courteously to Tybalt, but Tybalt is bent on fighting him and will not accept the explanation:

> What, draw, and talk of peace! I hate the word,
> As I hate hell, all Montagues, and thee:
> Have at thee, coward!

In his opinion, evidently, the man who has to have a reason for fighting is a coward. Our first impression of him as a passionate and revengeful young man is confirmed by Benvolio's reference to him, later in the same scene, as "the fiery Tybalt." When we next see him (Act I, Scene v) we have a better opportunity to study his appearance, especially when he turns his roving and suspicious glance on the disguised Romeo. A thunder-cloud settles over his face when he hears Romeo's voice; he clenches his fists, and his muscles grow rigid with anger. Romeo's motive in being present at a Capulet entertainment, he thinks, can

only be for insult; he will kill him on the spot as soon as the boy brings his sword. The sudden passion that masters Tybalt attracts old Capulet's attention. Tybalt may not be bound by the laws of hospitality, but Capulet is. He will not have his party spoiled by fighting nor a guest under his roof assailed. Tybalt is forced to bottle up his rage, but the effort makes his "flesh tremble"; there can be no further gayety for him that night; he withdraws to nurse his wrath and plan revenge. Some additional light is thrown upon him by his last appearance (Act III, Scene i). He is so intent on settling accounts with Romeo that he refuses to be turned aside by Mercutio's insults. Romeo's offense in being at the party has been magnified into "injuries" done to Tybalt. We are not altogether surprised that the Tybalt who would have slain a guest in his uncle's house should have been guilty of that "envious thrust" under Romeo's arm at the unguarded Mercutio. As Benvolio says of him, he had an "unruly spleen." We get a pleasanter glimpse of him when Juliet learns of his death (Act III, Scene ii). The nurse calls him courteous and honest and her best friend; she is a poor witness, her moral world being mostly upside down, but we may well believe that he had been kind to the old woman. Juliet speaks of him as her "dear-loved cousin," and this is to his credit. But the emphasis in this vigorously-drawn portrait is on the man's passionate nature and his bold and truculent spirit.

Description and analysis. What we learn of Tybalt in the play comes to us, as our brief examination has shown, by means of his appearance, of what he says and does, and of what is said about him. These, be it repeated, are the usual means of characterization, just as they are the usual means whereby we gain our knowledge of actual persons. But Shakespeare adds still another means of characterization

—the soliloquy. Twice we have been permitted to learn what Tybalt was thinking to himself; he was made to think out loud, or soliloquize, for our benefit. All the means of presenting character used by Shakespeare in *Romeo and Juliet* are used in stories, though modified by the fact that the writer cannot depend upon scenery and actors. Instead of relying upon an actor to represent a character visibly the writer must use description. In addition to making a character reveal his secret thoughts through a soliloquy, the writer may give an analysis of the character's thoughts and feelings.

Analysis of thoughts and motives—a presentation of the hidden inner life—sets a character before us in a most intimate manner. In real life only a trusting and very candid friend would reveal himself with anything like the completeness with which some characters in fiction and autobiography are revealed to us. Yet the beginner should be warned against using character analysis very freely. In the first place, analysis is not the most vivid means of portrayal. What a person says and does stamps him more indelibly on the mind than anything that may be said of him. And in the second place, as it is usually easier to talk about a person than to find speeches and actions which reveal his character clearly, one may easily fall into the habit of making analysis replace presentation. We shall do well, therefore, to put our reliance mainly on the sturdier and more graphic methods of characterization, using analysis occasionally as a supplementary means.

Dialogue. Dialogue is an excellent means of characterization. But we should not lose sight of the fact that dialogue is also a means of carrying on the action. Observe that in the dialogue printed on the following page the narrative is kept steadily moving forward:

[Mr. Pickwick and his companions were on their way to make a visit at Dingley Dell. Their horse had run away and smashed the chaise in which they were riding.]

The next thing to be done was to unharness the horse. This complicated process having been effected, the party walked slowly forward, leading the horse among them and abandoning the chaise to its fate.

An hour's walking brought the travelers to a little roadside public house, with two elm-trees, a horse trough, and a sign-post, in front; one or two deformed hay-ricks behind, a kitchen garden at the side, and rotten sheds and moldering out-houses jumbled in strange confusion all about it. A red-headed man was working in the garden; and to him Mr. Pickwick called lustily—"Hallo there!"

The red-headed man raised his body, shaded his eyes with his hand, and stared, long and coolly, at Mr. Pickwick and his companions.

"Hallo there!" repeated Mr. Pickwick.

"Hallo!" was the red-headed man's reply.

"How far is it to Dingley Dell?"

"Better er seven mile."

"Is it a good road?"

"No, t'ant." Having uttered this brief reply, and apparently satisfied himself with another scrutiny, the red-headed man resumed his work.

"We want to put this horse up here," said Mr. Pickwick; "I suppose we can, can't we?"

"Want to put that ere horse up, do ee?" repeated the red-headed man, leaning on his spade.

"Of course," replied Mr. Pickwick, who had by this time advanced, horse in hand, to the garden rails.

"Missus"—roared the man with the red head, emerging from the garden and looking very hard at the horse—"Missus."

A tall bony woman—straight all the way down—in a coarse blue pelisse, with the waist an inch or two below her arm-pits, responded to the call.

"Can we put this horse up here, my good woman?" said Mr. Tupman, advancing, and speaking in his most seductive tones. The woman looked very hard at the whole party; and the red-headed man whispered something in her ear.

"No," replied the woman, after a little consideration, "I'm afeerd on it."

"Afraid!"exclaimed Mr. Pickwick,"what's the woman afraid of?"

"It got us in trouble the last time," said the woman, turning into the house; "I woant have nothin' to say to 'un."

"Most extraordinary thing I ever met with in my life," said the astonished Mr. Pickwick.

"I—I—really believe," whispered Mr. Winkle, as his friends gathered round him, "that they think we have come by this horse in some dishonest manner."

"What!" exclaimed Mr. Pickwick, in a storm of indignation. Mr. Winkle modestly repeated his suggestion.

"Hallo, you fellow!" said the angry Mr. Pickwick, "do you think we stole this horse?"

"I'm sure ye did," replied the red-headed man, with a grin. . . .

"It's like a dream," ejaculated Mr. Pickwick, "a hideous dream. The idea of a man's walking about, all day, with a dreadful horse that he can't get rid of!"

The depressed Pickwickians turned moodily away, with the tall quadruped, for which they all felt the most unmitigated disgust, following slowly at their heels.[1]

Obviously, the most useful dialogue not only characterizes but keeps the stream of narrative flowing on its way. Conversation that does neither the one nor the other is not worth including.

Effective dialogue strikes the ear as being natural; it seems appropriate to the speaker and to the circumstances. It need not be a reproduction of actual talk unless we are aiming at a strictly literal truthfulness. Such a reproduction, as a matter of fact, would be out of place in all narratives that do not pretend to historical accuracy. If we are called on to tell a jury exactly what we saw the prisoner at the bar do and exactly what we heard him say, our aim must be exact truthfulness. But if we are entertaining friends with a story of some interesting personal experience we may allow ourselves a little freedom of choice; the bits of conversation given should be substantially true,

[1]Charles Dickens, *Pickwick Papers.*

but need not be (and very rarely can be) exactly the words originally spoken. Except in rare cases, actual conversation needs to be compressed and heightened to make it really effective in a written narrative. We weed out what is least characteristic and least to the point. The writer manages to obtain something of the flavor of conversation partly by suggesting characteristic or significant movements, attitudes, tones of voice, facial expressions; partly by raising his dialogue above the actual conversational level. He will not produce the illusion of reality if he merely acts as a stenographer.

But he should not raise his dialogue so far above the probable conversational level that the talk becomes artificial—seems too bookish or too refined or too elaborate to suit the personality of the speaker. There is little or none of the flavor of real conversation in the following stilted dialogue:

> [Malesherbes, one of the ministers of Louis XVI, discovers a young peasant girl watering the roses in his garden at daybreak.]

He approached her, and gently inquired "who had ordered her to water the grove."

"Oh, sir," said she, trembling, "my intentions were good, I assure you; I am not the only girl in the neighborhood who does it. Today it was my turn."

"How, your turn?"

"Yes, sir, yesterday it was Betsey's, and tomorrow it will be Mary's."

"What do you mean, my good girl? I do not understand you."

"As you have caught me in the fact, I can no longer keep it secret, neither do I think you will be very angry. You must know, sir, that having seen you from our fields, planting and attending these fine roses of yours, it was agreed among us, girls of the neighboring hamlets, to prove to the man who scatters so many blessings amongst us, and does such honor to agriculture, that he is not surrounded by ungrateful beings.

"Since he finds so much pleasure in cultivating his flowers, we agreed to assist him privately; so all the girls of fifteen years of age, on coming back from the village with their empty milk-pails, take it by turns to fetch water from the fountain close by; and every morning, before the sun rises, to water the rose trees of our friend, the kind benefactor of us all. For these last four years, sir, we have not neglected this duty, and I can even tell you that every girl is anxious to reach her fifteenth year, to have the honor of watering your roses."

This ingenuous narrative made a lively and affecting impression on the minister, who declared he had never received a greater gratification from any source whatever. . . . "But since all the young girls of the neighboring hamlets are so good as to give me every morning such convincing proofs of their regard, I engage, on my part, never to let a day pass without visiting my garden, which is now dearer to me than ever."

"In doing so, sir," said the young girl in a respectful manner, "you will increase our obligations and our pleasures; for then we shall drive our flocks this way, that we may have the happiness of seeing you at your ease, of regaling you with our songs, and of receiving occasionally lessons of instruction and wisdom from the paternal lips of your excellency."

"Yes, my child," replied the venerable man, "I shall be glad to see you all. If any misfortunes befall you, I shall endeavor to alleviate them; if any differences arise between you, I shall be able, perhaps, to remove them; and in any other way in which I can assist you, you may depend on my readiness to listen to your requests."

"In that case," said the blooming girl, with vivacity, "your excellency will not want employment; and I myself may in a little time have a word to say on that subject. But with your leave, sir, I will now return to my mother, who is waiting for me, and communicate to her my happy adventure."

Such talk from the lips of a young peasant girl sounds decidedly unreal. Dialogue of this sort makes it difficult for a reader to give any imaginative reality to the speaker.

When speech, however, seems to come directly from the persons of the story themselves instead of from the writer, it gives to them a lifelikeness difficult or impossible to attain by any other means. Matter and manner both count—the form and length of sentences, the choice of words, peculiarities of phrasing and pronunciation, are as important as what is said. The following quotation from *Pendennis* consists solely of dialogue, but it tells us much of the Baronet (Sir Francis Clavering) and of Blanche Amory:

"You see the little beggar's never been to church before, Miss Bell," the Baronet drawled out to a young lady who was visiting him; "no wonder he should make a row; I don't go in town neither, but I think it's right in the country to give a good example—and that sort of thing."

Miss Bell laughed and said, "The little boy did not give a particularly good example."

"Gad, I don't know," said the Baronet. "It ain't so bad, neither. Whenever he wants a thing, Frank always cwies, and whenever he cwies he gets it."

Here the child in question began to howl for a dish of sweetmeats on the luncheon table, and making a lunge across the tablecloth, upset a glass of wine over the best waistcoat of one of the guests. . . .

"We do spoil him so," said Lady Clavering . . . gazing fondly at the cherub, whose hands and face were now frothed over with the species of lather which is inserted in the confection called meringues *à la crême*.

"Gad, I was quite wight," said the Baronet. "He has cwied, and he has got it, you see. Go it, Fwank, old boy."

"Sir Francis is a very judicious parent," Miss Amory whispered. "Don't you think so, Miss Bell? I shan't call you Miss Bell—I shall call you Laura. I admired you so at church. Your robe was not well made, nor your bonnet very fresh. But you have such beautiful gray eyes, and such a lovely tint."

"Thank you," said Miss Bell, laughing.

"Your cousin is handsome, and thinks so. He is uneasy *de sa*

personne. He has not seen the world yet. Has he genius? Has he suffered? A lady, a little woman in a rumpled satin and velvet shoes—a Miss Pybus—came here, and said he has suffered. I, too, have suffered—and you, Laura, has your heart ever been touched?" Laura said "No!" but perhaps blushed a little at the idea or the question, so that the other said—

"Ah, Laura! I see it all. It is the *beau cousin.* Tell me everything. I already love you as a sister."

"You are very kind," said Miss Bell, smiling, "and—and it must be owned that it is a very sudden attachment."

"All attachments are so. It is electricity—spontaneity. It is instantaneous. I knew I should love you from the moment I saw you. Do you not feel it yourself?"

"Not yet," said Laura; "but I dare say I shall if I try."

"Call me by my name, then."

"But I don't know it," Laura cried out.

"My name is Blanche—isn't it a pretty name? Call me by it."

"Blanche—it is very pretty indeed."

"And while mama talks with that kind-looking lady—what relation is she to you? She must have been pretty once, but is rather *passée;* she is not well *gantée,* but she has a pretty hand—and while mama talks to her, come with me to my own room, my own, own room. It's a darling room, though that horrid creature, Captain Strong, did arrange it. Are you *épris* of him? He says you are, but I know better; it is the *beau cousin.* Yes—*il a de beaux yeux. Je n'aime pas les blonds, ordinairement. Car je suis blonde, moi—je suis Blanche et blonde*"—and she looked at her face and made a *moue* in the glass; and never stopped for Laura's answer to the questions which she had put.

As we listen to people conversing in such a natural and individual manner we soon feel well acquainted with them. The characters have a reality and liveliness that no amount of description alone could give them.

How is telling dialogue to be achieved? Partly by a quickened observation of the ways in which different kinds of men and women actually express themselves; partly by a clear realization of the personalities of the characters.

We must begin by observing the broad differences in the speech of different social and occupational groups, of different ages, and of different localities.[1] Such observations should prevent us from making a little country girl talk like a stage diplomat. Then we must go on to the more delicate observation of differences between persons belonging to the same group. The lawyers, doctors, and ministers of a community will probably have traits of speech in common when compared, say, with the ashmen, hodcarriers, and other unskilled laborers; but the members of each group will differ among themselves, too, and it is just these differences, these individual modes of speech, that we must try to catch if we would make Lawyer X and Doctor Y really live in our narrative. And now we come to the second condition of writing effective dialogue—a clear idea in our own minds of the individuality of our characters. Unless the persons in our narrative are distinct and alive to us as we write, they will scarcely seem lifelike to a reader. Othello must have been intensely alive in Shakespeare's imagination when the poet wrote those lines with which Othello puts an end to the brawl between his followers and Brabantio's:

> Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them.
> Good Signior, you shall more command with years,
> Than with your weapons.

As Professor Raleigh says, "fearlessness and the habit of command, pride that would be disgraced by a street brawl, respect for law and humanity, reverence for age, laconic speech, and a touch of contempt for the folly that would pit itself, with a rabble of menials, against the General of the Republic and his bodyguard—all this is expressed in two lines."[2]

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[1] This subject is discussed in chap. viii, "The English Vocabulary" (page 419).
[2] *Shakespeare*, "English Men of Letters Series."

EXERCISES

1. By what means of characterization is Madame Loisel ("The Necklace," reprinted on page 665) made known to the reader? Estimate the relative space given to each of these means.

2. After the reading aloud by your instructor of one of Mary E. Wilkins-Freeman's short stories, jot down your impressions of one of the leading persons (whose name will be given to the class by your instructor before he begins his reading). Make a list of the means of characterization used in presenting this character. Compare your results with others obtained by the class.

3. Write a brief character sketch of a minor figure in one of Shakespeare's plays, giving the evidence on which you base your judgments.

4. Find and bring to class for discussion a passage of character-analysis in a novel or short story. How many of the facts brought out by the analysis could be made clear by other methods?

5. Relate an anecdote of some person likely to be pretty well known to at least several members of the class. If no one in the class recognizes him, try to discover the cause of the lack of recognition.

6. Read "The Necklace" (page 665) with special attention to the dialogue. Observe all words used to indicate the speaker ("he said," "she replied," and so on). Note the places where the dialogue keeps the story moving ahead, where it characterizes, where it does both. Do you find any passages of dialogue that seem to you mere padding?—that might be omitted without any loss to your knowledge of the action or the characters?

7. Bring to class for discussion a short passage of dialogue which seems to you appropriate to the speakers and the occasion.

8. Write an account of some interesting incident, using dialogue as much as possible.

9. Write out as accurately as you can an actual conversation that you have heard. What changes would you make in it before using it in a story?

10. Write a few pages of conversation between two people, your object being not to tell a story but to characterize the speakers. Do not describe them directly, but describe their expressions, tones of voice, etc., whenever such description seems useful.

11. Can you point out one or more places in "The Story of Christopher" (page 640) where dialogue might be effectively used?

V. The Narrative Setting

The need for background. Setting, which gives a "local habitation" to action and character, is essential to vivid narrative because the mind cannot well conceive of events happening and people moving about in blank space. One cannot picture a person vividly in one's mind without setting of some kind. Complete imaginative realization of even the simplest narratives requires realization of background or environment, too. A narrative that contained no hint as to the setting would prove just as bare and unsatisfactory as a moving picture in which all the action took place before a white screen. In stern elimination of all that is unnecessary, few narratives surpass the stories of the Old Testament; but if we turn to such a narrative as the Book of Ruth, we find the setting quite clearly indicated. From "the country of Moab" Ruth goes to Bethlehem, where "all the city was moved about them"; she goes out into the field to glean ears of corn "after the reapers among the sheaves"; she lies at the feet of Boaz on the threshing floor where the barley has been winnowed; Boaz goes to the gate of the city and sits there among his kinsmen and "ten men of the elders of the city." There is background here, there are possibilities of pictures for the mind, as Keats knew when he wrote of Ruth "in tears amid the alien corn."

Setting as an organic part of a narrative. In simple and condensed narratives setting is merely indicated. The authors of "'Hick'ry' Shepherd" and the newspaper story of the Brooklyn hold-up (pages 306 and 316) attempt nothing more than a hint or a bare statement of the setting. But as narratives grow more detailed and particularized in action and character, all the resources of description are used to make the setting vivid and suggestive. Long passages of description thus find their way into histories, biographies, and novels. But if descriptions are not organic parts of the narrative and are brought in simply as ornament or padding they are open to the criticism Mark Twain makes in *The American Claimant:*

> No weather will be found in this book. . . . Many a reader who wanted to read a tale through was not able to do it because of delays on account of the weather. Nothing breaks up an author's progress like having to stop every few pages to fuss-up the weather. . . . Of course weather is neccssary to a narrative of human experience. . . . But it ought to be put where it will not be in the way; where it will not interrupt the flow of the narrative. . . . This weather will be found over in the back part of the book, out of the way. *See Appendix.*

The setting is an essential part of a narrative—and should be treated as essential. That is, a descriptive passage should not be introduced simply for its own sake, no matter how excellent it may be when considered apart from its context; instead, it should be woven into the very fabric of the narrative, should be a genuine part of the whole. Somehow we must find the happy mean between the narrative that is bare and starved for lack of description and the narrative that is swelled to tediousness with a superabundance of it. We must learn to distinguish between description that makes the narrative clearer, or more vivid,

or more interesting, or more moving, and description that merely holds up the progress of the action through "delays on account of the weather." The two passages that follow are examples of what we may call working descriptions; they really function—take up part of the strain of the fabric:

(A)

On a spur of the Sussex Downs, inland from Nettlefold, there stands a beech grove. The traveler who enters it out of the heat and brightness takes off the shoes of his spirit before its sanctity, and, reaching the center, across the clean beech-mat, he sits refreshing his brow with air and silence. For the flowers of sunlight on the ground under those branches are pale and rare, no insects hum, the birds are almost mute. And close to the border trees are the quiet, milk-white sheep, in congregation, escaping from noon heat. Here, above fields and dwellings, above the ceaseless network of men's doings, and the vapor of their talk, the traveler feels solemnity. All seems conveying divinity—the great white clouds moving their wings above him, the faint longing murmur of the boughs, and in far distance, the sea. And for a space his restlessness and fear know the peace of God.

So it was with Miltoun when he reached this temple, three days after that passionate night, having walked for hours, alone and full of conflict. . . .[1]

(B)

He began saying good-by to Gemma. He recollected for some reason Lensky's parting from Olga in *Oniegin*. He pressed her hand warmly, and tried to get a look at her face, but she turned a little away and released her fingers.

It was bright starlight when he came out on the steps. What multitudes of stars, big and little, yellow, red, blue, and white were scattered over the sky! They seemed all flashing, swarming, twinkling unceasingly. There was no moon in the sky, but without it every object could be clearly discerned in the half-clear, shadowless twilight. Sanin walked down the street to the end. He did not want to go home at once; he felt a desire to wander about a little

[1]John Galsworthy, *The Patrician*.

in the fresh air. He turned back and had hardly got on a level with the house where the Rosellis' shop was, when one of the windows looking out on the street suddenly creaked and opened; in its square of blackness—there was no light in the room—appeared a woman's figure, and he heard his name—"Monsieur Dimitri!"

He rushed at once up to the window . . . Gemma! She was leaning with her elbows on the window-sill, bending forward.

"Monsieur Dimitri," she began in a cautious voice, "I have been wanting all day long to give you something . . . but I could not make up my mind to; and just now, seeing you quite unexpectedly again, I thought that it seems it is fated. . . . "

Gemma was forced to stop at this word. She could not go on; something extraordinary happened at that instant.

All of a sudden, in the midst of the profound stillness, over the perfectly unclouded sky, there blew such a violent blast of wind that the very earth seemed shaking underfoot, the delicate starlight seemed quivering and trembling, the air went round in a whirlwind. The wind, not cold, but hot, almost sultry, smote against the trees, the roof of the house, its walls, and the street; it instantaneously snatched off Sanin's hat, crumpled up and tangled Gemma's curls. Sanin's head was on a level with the window-sill; he could not help clinging close to it, and Gemma clutched hold of his shoulders with both hands, and pressed her bosom against his head. The roar, the din, and the rattle lasted about a minute. . . . Like a flock of huge birds the reveling whirlwind darted reveling away. A profound stillness reigned once more.

Sanin raised his head and saw above him such an exquisite, scared, excited face, such immense, large, magnificent eyes—it was such a beautiful creature he saw that his heart stood still within him, he pressed his lips to the delicate tress of hair that had fallen on his bosom, and could only murmur, "Oh, Gemma!"

"What was that? Lightning?" she asked, her eyes wandering afar while she did not take her bare arms from his shoulder.

"Gemma!" repeated Sanin.

She sighed, looked around behind her into the room, and with a rapid movement pulling the now faded rose out of her bodice, she threw it to Sanin.

"I wanted to give you this flower."

He recognized the rose, which he had won back the day before.

But already the window had slammed-to, and through the dark pane nothing could be seen, no trace of white.

Sanin went home without his hat. . . . He did not even notice that he had lost it.

It was quite morning when he fell asleep. And no wonder! In the blast of that instantaneous summer hurricane he had almost as instantaneously felt, not that Gemma was lovely, not that he liked her—that he had known before. . . . but that he almost . . . loved her. As suddenly as that blast of wind had love pounced down upon him.[1]

There is nothing of the "set" or purely ornamental here. A good way to ascertain that fact would be to shift the position of the descriptions—move, say, Mr. Galsworthy's picture of the beech grove from the fourteenth chapter (where it is to be found) to the fourth. There it would have no pertinency. Where we find it, it is woven inseparably into the entire chapter and is part of the hero's emotional experience. Here is a somewhat mechanical but nevertheless useful test that we may apply to our own work: Will our descriptions of the old farm-house, the evening sky, the view from the veranda, the song of the wood-thrush, the thunderstorm, do about as well in one place as in another? If so, our narrative will not be likely to suffer much if we omit them; perhaps it will gain noticeably in forward movement.

Significant details. If we would neither clutter a narrative with description that serves no useful purpose nor omit the details of setting that really contribute to understanding or appreciation, we must learn to look for what is most significant in the scene of action. What features or characteristics in the scene have any bearing upon the event or upon the persons concerned in it? Thus we come to close grips with the essentials of the setting.

[1]Turgenieff, *Spring Freshets*.

Let us consider two examples and see wherein the setting has a direct bearing on the narratives as a whole. The first one is a brief account of a minor incident in the day's news: A girl is talking in the telephone booth at a neighborhood drug store at closing-time; she is locked in the store and finally makes her escape with the aid of the police. This is how a reporter for the New York *Times* treats the incident:

> Josephine Koykowiser, of 540 Kosciusko Street, Brooklyn, had a lot to tell when she entered the telephone booth in the drug store of I. H. Kipkis at 36 Reid Avenue, Brooklyn, on Saturday night. By the time that she had said it all, it was Sunday morning.
>
> Miss Koykowiser's five cents worth of conversation not only occupied parts of two days, but it was so absorbing that she did not notice the lights being put out and the drug store being locked. She did not hear the clanging of an ambulance called to a street accident in front of the store, or the shouts of the crowd outside. She talked right through it all.
>
> Even the most thrilling talk has to come to an end sometime, and when the young woman hung up the receiver and came back from the Elysian fields, she found herself a prisoner in the dark drug store. She ran and beat on the glass doors and soon had the crowd from the ambulance.
>
> "Get me out," she shouted.
>
> "How did you get in?" they demanded.
>
> She could not make her explanation heard and did not regard the question of how she got in as the matter before the house anyway. But policeman after policeman came and each one shouted:
>
> "How did you get in?"
>
> The front door, side door, front light and side lights were tested and found locked.
>
> "How did you get in?" they kept on demanding. The girl kept on shouting answers, but could not make herself heard.
>
> The policemen sent telephone calls and messengers to get the druggist with the key, but could not reach him or the clerk. Finally, they tried to crawl through the transom

over the front door. This was too small for any policeman on the spot.

A general alarm was sent out from the Brownsville and East New York station to find a policeman who would fit a small transom. Several undersized men were tested and rejected. At last Policeman Frank Peguida was found a perfect fit. On the shoulders of another policeman, he wriggled through the transom, and dropped inside the door. He let the girl out by the rear door and over a fence. Then he locked the rear door and wriggled out through the transom.

When the girl made her appearance on the sidewalk, forty voices demanded at once, "How did you get in?"

But she shot off for 540 Kosciusko Street at a rapid pace and did not utter a sound.

The reporter gives us the strictly necessary facts as to time and place—Saturday night, a telephone booth in such-and-such a drug store. Every additional fact of setting that he mentions has a clear relation to the narrative. The darkened store and the noises outside to which the girl remains oblivious are highly significant. The fact that the front doors were glass made it possible for her to attract attention to her predicament. The subsequent actions of the police are shaped by the locked doors and windows and the small transom. Had any of these features of the setting been different, it is evident that the course of the narrative would have been altered in some degree. There can be no question, therefore, but that the details of setting are significant.

Our second example is just a short extract from *Scott's Last Expedition*, a narrative that occupies the better part of two large volumes:

. . . P. O. Evans and I prospected for a route up the steep snow slope of Descent Pass. Evans had been with Armitage when he used this route in 1903. We found the conditions very different. Soon we were sinking nearly two feet at every step in soft snow,

through which I knew it would be almost impossible to drag the sledges. The slope soon increased to 11°, so that we found some difficulty in progressing even unencumbered. . . .

We had been roped for two miles and were still ascending. We now began to get among crevasses, though few were visible through the thick sheet of snow. Quite suddenly I slipped in to the thigh, and sounding with the ice ax just in front found two inches of snow over the crevasse and very little more behind me. I was evidently standing in a narrow bridge. At the same time Evans called out that he was over another about fifteen feet behind, so that for a few moments things were rather involved. He got back on to firmer ground and hauled me back, and when we saw the surface begin to cave in bodily we decided in Evans's graphic language to "give it a miss."

We seemed to be in the least impossible part of the pass, and I could see plenty worse ahead. So I decided to abandon this route and continue down the Ferrar to Butter Point. . . .[1]

The setting in this extract occupies a relatively large share of our attention, as it does in most narratives of exploration and difficult travel in remote places. And yet the details are significant, a vital part of the whole. Men pit their intelligence, endurance, and courage against hostile nature. The conditions of the surface of snow or ice for sledge travel spell success or failure. Even the weather becomes of first-rate importance; because of the weather Captain Scott and his two remaining comrades were starved to death within eleven miles of One Ton Depot, where a supply of food had been cached for their return journey from the South Pole. As we read those last pages of Captain Scott's diary, so touching and so heroic, we find the smallest details of setting full of interest and significance. They meant death to the intrepid explorers.

Thus we see that what might be trivial or pointless in one instance may in another instance be interesting and

[1]T. Griffith Taylor's account of "The Western Journeys."

important. Into which of these classes a given fact of setting will fall may be determined by seeking an answer to the question: Does this fact in any way affect the events or the persons of my narrative?

Harmony and contrast. In the most artistic effects of setting, harmony and contrast are often important factors. If we recall some of the more striking and memorable episodes in favorite novels we shall see that this is so. In *The Ordeal of Richard Feverel* there is perfect correspondence between the freshness of the early morning on the river and the freshness of first love between Lucy and Richard; between the great storm in the hills and the storm in Richard's soul. In *Vanity Fair*, when Becky has been cast off by Rawdon Crawley, the desolation of her spirit finds a counterpart in the dreariness of her dismantled room. In *Tess of the D' Urbervilles*, the growth of Tess's love for Angel Claire is reflected in the luxuriant background of the Frome Valley; her despair and anguish find the cold bleakness of the upland turnip fields in perfect keeping. Turgenieff's *Smoke* gives us a masterly illustration of the power of contrast. The scene is laid in Baden-Baden before the Franco-Prussian war, when that watering-place was at the height of its gayety. The background is made insistently frivolous and purposeless—a troop of idlers who revolve about one another as futilely as midges on a still summer evening; from this, in telling contrast, stand forth the purposefulness and downrightness of the hero, Litvinoff, and the truth and integrity of the heroine, Tanya.

The effective use of harmony and contrast is by no means confined to fiction. Our next illustration is taken from a newspaper account of the baptism by immersion of eleven converts to the faith of the Church of the First Born. After a statement of the principal beliefs of this church and a

description of the piety, steadfastness, and humility of its small group of adherents, the report continues:

> The old swimming hole at Rahway is a pool between two spillways of the Rahway waterworks. It is perhaps seventy-five yards long and of an average width of between thirty and forty yards. It is actually a cross-section of the Rahway River.
>
> To this shaded pool the youths and maidens of Rahway flock, when they have leisure, and disport themselves agilely in its waters. . . . The bathing is safe and unsophisticated. There is no beach nor life-guard. The east bank is precipitous and the west bank low lying, but both banks are overhung with tall elms and oaks.
>
> The modest plant of the Rahway waterworks is on the east bank. From the main building the engine house roof extends at a little above the level of the road for a length of about one hundred feet and a width of twenty-five feet. The roof is covered with flat red tiles and so forms a stage or balcony, surrounded by a railing of galvanized iron pipe. It is reached by a short flight of wooden steps.
>
> On this balcony yesterday, Pastor Quigley marshaled his little flock for the ceremonies of baptism. Mrs. Quigley played hymns on a portable harmonium, the bellows of which were not good, so that her feet pedaled feverishly the while her slender hands moved in the more solemn rhythms of the Moody and Sankey hymnal over the keys. The congregation, perhaps one hundred and fifty, sat on folding chairs brought in a motor truck; and in the front row, the place of honor, were the eleven candidates for baptism. . . .
>
> And beyond and around and about were spread the hosts of unbelievers. It has been said that the old swimming hole at Rahway is not a sophisticated beach. Most of the swimmers appeared to be in their teens. . . . .
>
> They represented, these spectators, beyond all question, the younger generation of which many things have been spoken and written and at whom so many sermons have been preached. They represented also the world; obviously they represented the flesh; and to the true saints their patient devotion to material pleasures must certainly have represented the devil.

Yet they were very patient with Pastor Quigley and his flock. For more than an hour, while the service and the baptismal ceremonial were in progress, they withdrew from their playground and squatted decoratively around the tree-shaded banks. It is true that while the service was going forward there arose an occasional shout of "Step on it," which may have been meant as a request to the pastor to hasten proceedings; but every time an irreverent one so expressed himself, a dozen of the more sober-minded would rise to cry "Pipe down, you."

Pastor Quigley, protected by rubber boots, waded slowly waist deep into the stream, which was brown from mud washed down by recent rains. He was joined by his assistant, George Baier, also rubber booted and powerful of arm. Together they stood in the water among the dappled shadows thrown by the trees which branched overhead and received one by one the souls which they were solemnly dedicating to God.

The women came first and then the men. Each, entering the water, was received by the supporting right arm of the little pastor flung around his or her shoulders. With faces uplifted and hands clasped they waited, his left hand pointed toward the sky, while the pastor invoked a blessing on their spiritual rebirth. Then they took the plunge, backward.

The baptism occupied about fifteen minutes. The candidates retired to the bathhouses provided by a generous town council and the old swimming hole was returned to its own.[1]

The reporter lifts his account out of the commonplace by perceiving the contrast between the religious ceremonial and its setting. The associations of a waterworks are, to say the least, not ecclesiastical; the swimming pool and its frequenters do not ordinarily suggest baptism. These contrasts give the reporter his opportunity to write an account that attracts and holds attention.

Crude writers of the sensational school make harmony or contrast ridiculous when they bring on smiling skies and

[1]Frederick B. Edwards, in the New York *Herald-Tribune* for July 20, 1925.

singing birds every time their hero has a pleasant thought, and dark clouds and mutterings of thunder whenever their villain "nurses a fell purpose." And the beginner may find that his attempts to attain a striking harmony or contrast bring about only artificial results. If so, it is better, of course, to forego them. But in themselves, when used with restraint and true feeling for the relation of man and his environment, harmony and contrast give added interest and power to narration.

"Atmosphere." Setting, when handled with skill, helps to create what is known as "atmosphere" or "tone." Other things than place or than environment in its narrower meaning contribute to the atmosphere of a narrative. The conversation, the manners and habits of the characters, their degree of civilization, their culture and their social surroundings all help to produce the total effect of which we are speaking. There are differences of tone even in narratives dealing with people who live in the same grade of society, as in the case of Meredith's *The Egoist*, and Galsworthy's *The Patrician:* the two sets of characters belong in the upper circles of English society, yet in one story there is a tone of lightness, wit, and raillery—in the other a tone of repression and brooding destiny. Such differences are obvious when the characters belong to quite different grades of society, with different standards, habits, and culture. Between Mrs. Wharton's *The House of Mirth*, with its fashionable city persons, and Miss Willa Cather's *My Antonia*, with its unpretentious country and village characters, there is a marked difference of atmosphere. Again, atmosphere is very distinct in well-written narratives dealing with past ages; such historical novels as *The Cloister and the Hearth*, *Westward Ho!*, *Kenilworth*, and *Henry Esmond* are examples.

Unity through setting. Setting, when it creates "tone," is often an important unifying force in narrative. It helps to bring about an effect of singleness, even in the midst of complexity. Speaking of Zola, Professor Bliss Perry remarks that "there is no denying that beyond most other novelists of our own day he has succeeded in making the setting of his novels reveal their essential unity. That germinal idea which first stimulated the creative imagination of the author remains with the readers as a haunting impression long after the persons and the action of the tale have faded from the memory."[1]

Whenever the "germinal idea" of a narrative lies in the setting—a locality, a social group, an historical period—the setting makes for unity. In other cases—and this will hold true only of fiction—the unity of a story may be enforced by placing the action in a setting that befits it. An elementary application of this principle is to give one's characters a fitting background, to place them in the sort of environment in which they might actually exist. Nothing is commoner in feebly written stories than to feel characters and environment tugging in opposite directions, to the utter destruction of unity—and of plausibility. The characters, let us say, when all their outward trappings of fashion are removed, are in manners, point of view, and mental habits essentially simple and obscure inhabitants of some provincial town; the setting in which they are placed is what the author fondly believes to be that of fashionable society disporting itself at Palm Beach or Newport. Mark Twain has utilized the comic possibilities of such a medley in *A Connecticut Yankee at King Arthur's Court;* but the writer who aims at a serious effect should beware of such incongruity. There are possibilities of pathos and even tragedy

[1] *A Study of Prose Fiction*, page 176.

in the conflict of character and environment, but conscious art of a really high order is needed to make such a situation effective. For most of us it is far safer to give our characters a natural background.

EXERCISES

1. Point out in class all the details of setting in "The Death of the Dauphin" (page 320).

2. Point out in class all the details of setting in "The Necklace" (page 665).

3. Find in the Appendix a passage of description that seems to you an organic part of the narrative from which it is taken. Explain why you think it organic.

4. Can you find a narrative quoted in this chapter in which the setting is merely incidental background that might be completely changed without affecting character or action?

5. Show how the action in the account of the girl locked in the drug store (page 341) might have been changed if the doors had been of solid wood, or if the side door had been unlocked, or if it had been a very stormy night, or if there had been no street accident and no crowd.

6. Point out what seem to you the significant features of the setting in the extract from *Typee* (page 290).

7. Try to recall from your reading an instance of setting that is in harmony with the action or with the feelings of some character. If time allows, read the passage to the class, giving such explanations as may be necessary.

8. Can you find an instance of the use of contrast in "The Death of the Dauphin" (page 320)?

9. Describe the atmosphere or tone of two or three short stories or novels that you know well. (A short theme might be devoted to each one.)

10. Add details of setting to the following account. Aim to give the reader a more vivid realization of the scene. If you see any opportunity for contrast, make use of it. Compare your additions with those made by other members of the class.

A little girl of Rosedale outdanced a group of gypsy girls yesterday, and won for herself a green and notched withe. The withe will be planted firmly before the tent of the gypsy king, and that means, as anyone familiar with gypsy customs is aware, that a strange girl has invaded the camp and bested the tribal girls. The withe will stand until one of the defeated girls can better the stranger's grace.

The five Lucas boys are musicians. Every Sunday afternoon they gather the hundred gypsies and play until dusk. The girls dance and the older men and women pat time. Soon after the Lucases began to strum their instruments yesterday a little stranger walked upon the scene and watched the dancing. Her fingers twitched and her eyes snapped with excitement.

One of the Lucas boys noticed her and sent his fingers crashing across the strings. It was too much for Viola Hansen, who is twelve. She began to dance. The orchestra swung into a Spanish dance, full of fire and spirit. Faster flashed Viola's legs and feet, and faster the instruments whined their notes. Soon all the native girls had joined the elder gypsies in patting time. Viola danced alone.

Without ceasing the musicians changed to a slow, compelling note that caused Viola to cease her mad whirl and do the age-old snake dance of the gypsies. It was a test. The Lucases, all gypsies, wished to confound this strange dancer. Viola never faltered nor lost a step.

Suddenly the gypsy king halted Viola. He jabbed a notched withe firmly in the ground and turning to the tribe said: "Viola, here she danced."

The contest was over and Viola walked quietly away.

GENERAL EXERCISES IN NARRATION

1. Analyze a chapter of biography or autobiography, a chapter of history, and a short story to determine in each case whether or not a single narrative element prevails. Report your findings to the class.

2. A competitive exercise which will furnish material for profitable comparisons in class may be carried out as follows:

Each student hands in to the instructor a synopsis of a story. The instructor selects the best of these and submits them to the class to be voted on. The synopsis receiving the largest number of votes is to be used by each member of the class as the basis for a story. The resulting stories, or a selection from them, may then be compared and discussed by the class.

3. Compare the narrative method of Tennyson's *Dora* with that of the *Book of Ruth*.

4. Discuss the action, characterization, and setting of the following story, making your criticisms as specific as possible:

En Rapport

The old Newton homestead, with its many gables and curious porches, nestled into the grove of tall and knotted pine trees, as if seeking protection from the bitter and snow-laden wind that whistled from the north. Behind it a high mountain covered with leafless trees and gaunt pines rose in majestic splendor. The sky was full of hurrying clouds, and the cold December moon burst forth from among them at intervals. The house itself was dark and apparently deserted. It was, indeed, a dreary spot, and the only other sign of habitation was the light from a house half a mile away. The old gate finally swung open and a woman stepped out into the moonlight. She hesitated a little, and then moved slowly up the path that wound its way through the rustic, but weed-strewn garden to the front door of the ancient mansion.

The interior of the house presented quite a different picture. Everything was cozy and comfortable in the spacious and high ceilinged library. A huge log blazed and sizzled upon the hearth. The flames, with cheerful light, showed long rows of books and

antique furniture. A huge leather chair, a little to the right of the hearth, cast a deep shadow upon that part of the room. A large chandelier hung from the paneled ceiling. A shaded electric lamp on the mahogany table threw its white light upon the occupant of the chair—a young man of fine physique and blond hair. His straight limbs were stretched out luxuriously before the fire, and a book lay open on his lap. He was about to indulge in a reverie, and had made himself comfortable when the door opened and in came his butler, his arms full of evergreen.

"It won't be Xmas unless we have some pine around." And he began decorating the room. "Caroline has just stuffed the turkeys, and everything is ready for tomorrow, Master Clifford. When do you expect them to come tomorrow?" said the old white-haired darkie, as he stooped to turn the log a little.

"What's that?" exclaimed Clifford Newton, stretching himself lazily. "Oh, yes, father, mother, and sister will arrive on the nine-thirty. I hope that it snows tonight. You and Caroline have certainly kept this old house in a fine condition all these years. Here's the only place that I really live. Yet ever since I came, yesterday, I have been very restless. An indescribable longing has taken possession of me. Uncle Bill, do you believe in ghosts?"

"I reckon I do. It was only the other night that I saw her coming into this room." And he pointed to a painting of a young and beautiful girl of Colonial days. "She used to frighten me, but when one's old he must get used to spirits."

Clifford directed the rays of the lamp upon the picture. "She must have been wonderfully beautiful. Ah, those were thrilling times," he exclaimed musingly, half to himself.

"Her name was Virginia Rockford, and was your great-grandfather's sweetheart. You are his exact image," and as he narrated, he pointed to another picture, "It is a sad story that"——

A feminine voice from the rear of the house interrupted the story, and called the narrator to his duties. Clifford, in a reminiscent mood, lay back in the comfortable depths of the old chair and gazed at the painting above the mantel until he fell into a sort of trance. As he gazed, the mysterious longing took possession of him, and he felt himself calling and urging her to come to him. To his amazement the picture smiled at him, and then as quickly vanished. Suddenly the room seemed changed. The

furniture was as before, but the room was brilliantly lighted by the candles in the chandelier, which was decorated with mistletoe. The old clock stood in its now lighted corner as before, and pointed to a few minutes to twelve. He seemed to see himself standing before the fire dressed in the uniform of a general of the Revolutionary army. He was dressed and soiled as if from a long ride, and he appeared to have entered by the window on his right. Presently, after watching the minuet, which was in progress in the next room, and at the same time warming himself, he started for the ballroom. At that instant the dance ended with much applause, and a young girl, with flushed cheeks, rushed into the library. Surprised and startled she hesitated and then threw herself into his waiting arms.

Here the vision became indistinct, and when Clifford saw clearly again a tragedy was being enacted. His shadow, so the visionary hero seemed, was suddenly confronted by a burly officer of the British Army. A wordless argument followed. Suddenly the English officer drew his revolver, and as the girl rushed between him and her lover, a sharp report rang out. A scream followed. When the smoke cleared away Virginia lay on the floor, a bullet hole in her head. Across her lay the officer, and above both he stood with a bloody sword in his hand. As he gazed, he felt a blinding pain in his head, and as the vision vanished he heard booms like the roar of cannons.

As Clifford sat rigidly staring at the picture, the solitary figure in the rustic garden had entered the house noiselessly, and now stood with open, but unseeing eyes, upon the threshold of the room. The light from the hearth showed her to be young and very beautiful, and a copy of the girl in the painting. Slowly, like one who walks in her sleep, she approached the hearth with a familiar step, and seating herself upon the broad arm of the chair, she laid her right hand upon his head.

The last stroke of the clock, announcing the birth of a new day, restored these two *en rapport* from their trance. Turning he beheld her in silent amazement, and then gasped, "You! Virginia! I thought you were dead!" Then going to the fire he placed a finger in the leaping flame. His startled "ough" was answered by a sweet, rippling laugh.

"Yes, we are awake now, and my name is Virginia Rockford, although I don't know how you should know it, unless you

asked me before I awoke. I often walk in my sleep. I wonder where I have journeyed this time." And she examined the room with interest. "Please tell me where I am, and who is that. She is my image!"

"As I sat here among the things of the past this evening, I had a vision of the past, and awoke to find you."

A long silence followed. Only the hearth fire lit up the room, and cast elusive shadows over the two huddled together in his great-grandfather's chair. Her brown hair, soft, rosy skin, dimpled cheeks and sparkling eyes seemed to him a beautiful dream picture as she sat so close to him.

"Isn't it wonderful that you could come to me from out the past. Truly such love as our ancestors' and ours dies not and springs into the life eternal." And Clifford ended the happy silence.

"Yes, it is," she answered, and glanced in the direction of the clock, as he drew her to him. "Give me my first Christmas gift."

5. As a subject for a newspaper account let the class choose an event of general interest such as a game or a debate. A selection of the resulting accounts should be read in class for comparison and criticism.

PART THREE

SENTENCES AND WORDS

CHAPTER VII

SHAPING THE SENTENCE

Introductory. Good sentences are correct in grammar and clear in meaning. Correctness and clarity are minimum requirements. In some cases, as in a cookbook or a set of directions for the care of a lawn-mower, clarity and correctness are also the maximum requirements. A reader has no right to expect that the sentences in a cookbook shall be varied in pattern, agreeable in sound, or anything more than clear and grammatical. In this chapter we shall consider clearness, along with other desirable qualities soon to be mentioned; but shall not deal with grammar, assuming that the students who use this book have been sufficiently grounded in the ordinary rules of grammar before entering college.[1] Now, clearness, so far as it results from a proper shaping of the sentence (it results, too, from sound grammar and the right choice of words), is dependent on unity of substance and coherence in arrangement. These important matters we shall consider first of all. But clearness alone, difficult as it often is to achieve, will not satisfy us if we have a spark of workmanlike ambition. There are advantages in forming our sentences so that their most important parts will receive most emphasis; in varying their length and structure to keep them from growing monotonous; in avoiding unpleasant combinations of sounds. In this chapter, accordingly, we shall study emphasis, variety, and sound, as well as clarity.

[1]Students who wish to refresh their memory on some point of grammar, or make up a deficiency in their earlier training therein, will find a treatment of grammar in the Appendix, pages 555-572.

I. Unity

Sentence-unity a modern requirement. One of the most strongly marked tendencies in the development of modern English prose has been to make each sentence a clearly-defined unit of thought. Readers of today are much less inclined to tolerate the easy-going attitude of those older writers who apparently ended a sentence only because they had to stop for breath or refreshment. In point of range and amplitude the following sentence would seem conspicuously out of place in a typical prose passage of the present day:

Surely I suppose this but a vaine conceipt of simple men, which judge things by ther effects, and not by ther causes; for I would rather thinck the cause of this evel, which hangeth upon that country, to proceede rather upon the unsoundnesse of the counsell, and plotts, which you say have bin oftentimes layd for her reformacion, or of fayntnesse in following and effecting the same, then of any such fatall course or appoyntment of god, as you misdeme; but it is the manner of men, that when they are fallen into any absurdity, or theyre actions succeede not as they would, they are ready alwayes to impute the blame thereof unto the heavens, so to excuse their own folly and imperfections: so have I also heard it often wished, (even of some whos great wisdome in opinion should seme to judg more soundly of so weighty a consideracon) that all that land weare a sea-poole: which kind of speach is the manner rather of desperate men far driven, to wish the utter ruine of that which they cannot redresse, then of grave counsellors, which ought to thinck nothing so hard, but that through wisdome, it may be maistered and subdued; since the poet sayth that the wiseman shall rule even over the starrs, much more over the earth: for weare it not the part of a desperate phisition to wish his diseased patient dead, rather then to imploy the best indevours of his skill for his recovery: but since we are so far entred, let us I pray you, devise of those evills, by which that country is held in this wretched case, that it cannot, as you say, be recured.[1]

[1]Edmund Spenser, *View of the Present State of Ireland.*

Modern practice decrees that the sentence shall be a real unit of thought—that it shall have one main idea to which all the other ideas touched on in the sentence shall be evidently subordinate. So settled is current habit in this respect that we have come to impute ignorance or confusion of mind to those whose sentences are not units. Lack of unity in sentences gives what Professor Barrett Wendell called a "subtle effect of vulgarity" to writing. One of the readiest means, therefore, of making an ignorant or vulgar person in a story talk "in character" is to put into his mouth sentences which obviously are not unified. Readers of *Martin Chuzzlewit* will recall the conversation of Mrs. Gamp:

"Isn't true!" cried Mrs. Gamp. "True! Don't I know as that dear woman is expecting of me at this minit, Mr. Westlock, and is lookin' out of window down the street, with little Tommy Harris in her arms, as calls me his own Gammy, and truly calls, for bless the mottled little legs of that there precious child (like Canterbury Brawn his own dear father says, which so they are) his own have I been, ever since I found him, Mr. Westlock, with his small red worsted shoe a gurglin' in his throat, where he had put it in his play, a chick, while they was leavin' of him on the floor a looking for it through the 'ouse and him a choakin' sweetly in the parlor!"[1]

No sensible person, writing with a serious purpose, desires to be unconsciously funny or to be thought ignorant or scatter-brained. Consequently, when a sensible writer is speaking in his own person, he aims to make his sentences unified.

Unity through completeness. "Enough, but not too much" is a good maxim to apply to our sentences. We achieve unity by including whatever is necessary to adequate expression of the thought of the sentence and by excluding

[1]Chap. xxiv.

whatever is unnecessary or irrelevant. Let us consider first the attainment of unity through completeness. If, instead of presenting a reasonably complete thought, a sentence gives but a fragment of that thought, it is not a unit. The passage which follows contains sentences so fragmentary, so broken-off from the main body of the writer's thought, that they fail to give us the mental satisfaction which sentence unity alone can give:

1. Since the middle of the nineteenth century the study of history has undergone changes. These changes are sweeping. They are as sweeping as those which have in the same time affected the study of the physical sciences. Vast groups of facts are distributed through various ages. They are also distributed through various countries. They have been subjected to comparison. Likewise, they have been subjected to analysis. The result has been that they have thrown fresh light upon one another. In many cases they have enabled us to recover historic points of view. These points of view had been buried in oblivion. They had been buried a long while.

These broken bits, grammatically complete though they be, need to be gathered together into groups in order to form real units of thought. A writer owes his reader something more than the raw stuff out of which ideas are constructed. In the hands of one who really gives shape and definiteness to his thoughts, the raw material of the preceding passage is molded into a finished product:

2. Since the middle of the nineteenth century the study of history has undergone changes no less sweeping than those which have in the same time affected the study of the physical sciences. Vast groups of facts distributed through various ages and countries have been subjected to comparison and analysis, with the result that they have not only thrown fresh light upon one another, but have in many cases enabled us to recover historic points of view that had long been buried in oblivion.[1]

[1]John Fiske, *The Beginnings of New England.*

Sometimes lack of unity results from failure to complete the grammatical structure of a sentence. A long parenthesis, for example, may so distract the writer's attention that he overlooks the fact that he has not finished his sentence. Apparently that is what has happened to the author of the following:

Across the wireless bridge of thought I extend the hand of good fellowship to "Marcus," for surely the admission that he reads and loves the writings of Montaigne—the man whose works received a well-thumbed perusal from the immortal Shakespeare; the writer who provoked our Emerson of beloved memory to add a new page and greater force to the meaning, purpose, and power of skepticism, in his *Representative Men*, and whose treasures of thought, stores of quaint and curious lore, all melted through the alembic of his own forceful personality, were expressed in language at once dignified and full of pictorial charm for the delight of all ages.

He is just on the point of explaining why he extends "the hand of good fellowship to 'Marcus,'" when his mention of Montaigne sets him off on a tangent. What follows is all parenthetical, and the sentence proper never comes to an end; the clause beginning "for surely the admission that he reads," is left dangling in the air.

Legitimate suppressions of subject or predicate. A distinction should be drawn between such violations of unity as the foregoing and those allowable suppressions of subject or predicate which are used for emphasis or rapidity:

1. On a man of poor Rohan's somnolence and violence, the sympathizing mind can estimate what the effect was. Consternation, stupefaction, the total jumble of blood, brains, and nervous spirits; in ear and heart, only universal hubbub, and louder and louder singing of the agitated air. A fall comparable to that of Satan![1]

2. As often as anything is said to my neighbor, Wilcox, about

[1]Carlyle, *The Diamond Necklace.*

the suffering brought by hot weather to the tenement districts, his remark is "Yes, but they don't mind it as you or I would." This response is as prompt to act as the flare of a safety-match, and something more certain. What is more, he has been repeating it for twenty years and he will—in common with some thousands of his brethren who conceive it the whole duty of man to vote the straight ticket and send their sons to college—go on repeating it for twenty more, if he lives.

Switchboard minds. Press a given button and get a given result.[1]

3. A figure was moving in his direction; he looked up from a moment's reverie, to see a woman seat herself at the opposite side of his table. A laugh of pleased recognition; a clasp of hands.[2]

4. Their cab, wheeling into the main thoroughfare, joined in the race of cabs flying as for life toward the East. Past the Park, where the trees new-leafed were swinging their skirts like ballet dancers in the wind; past the Stoic's and the other clubs, rattling, jingling, jostling for the lead, shooting past omnibuses that looked cosy in the half-light with their lamps and rows of figures solemnly opposed.[3]

Such suppressions of subject or predicate should never be tolerated, however, if they are liable to lead to misunderstanding or obscurity. Nor are they advisable unless one sees in them some positive gain over fuller forms. If they are not sparingly and appropriately used, they become sensational or eccentric rather than emphatic, and make a style not so much lively and rapid as staccato and jerky—something like that of the Stranger in *Pickwick Papers:*

Conquests! Thousands. Don Bolaro Fizzgig—Grandee—only daughter—Donna Christina—splendid creature—loved me to distraction—jealous father—high-souled daughter—handsome Englishman—Donna Christina in despair—prussic acid—stomach pump in my portmanteau—operation performed—old Bolaro in ecstasies—consent to our union—join hands and floods of tears—romantic story—very.

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[1]Seymour Demming, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, May, 1914.
[2]George Gissing, *Human Odds and Ends.*
[3]John Galsworthy, *The Country House.*

Unity through exclusion. We come now to the second part of our maxim for unity ("Enough, but not too much") —the attainment of unity through the exclusion of whatever is unnecessary to the development of the main idea of a sentence. The parts of a sentence should have a close and evident relation to one another and should work together to produce in the reader's mind a single thought or impression. Statements that pull in opposite directions, or refuse to coalesce, should be put in separate sentences. Anything, in fact, which hinders rather than helps the development of the central idea, or which draws attention away from it, tends to destroy unity and should therefore be weeded out of the sentence. In the two paragraphs below we shall see some typical examples of sentences in which this necessary weeding has been neglected.

The incongruous sentence. Probably the most obvious sin against unity consists in putting into a sentence statements that have no evident relation to one another:

Mrs. Barstow makes delicious peach shortcake, and last week her oldest daughter, Carrie, went to Sioux City to spend a few weeks with her Aunt Martha.

The two statements have no connection. The same fault is illustrated in the following:

I let my fellows pull an easy stroke; because of the heavy dew the clear sparkle of the stars seemed to fall on me cold and wetting.

Lancaster, as might be guessed from its many tobacco warehouses, is the center of the tobacco-growing industry in eastern Pennsylvania, and has four parks, two of which are just outside the city limits; in one of these parks may be seen the house of General Hand, the Revolutionary soldier.

Sentences like these are of the waste-basket type into which are dumped all sorts of odds and ends. After reading a

waste-basket sentence one is sometimes curious to know why the author stopped where he did, why he did not go on and on, like the imaginary author of the following "Letter from Young Lady in Answer to Invitation from Old Schoolmistress":

My dear Miss Price:

How awfully sweet of you to ask me to stay with you for a few days but how can you think I may have forgotten you for of course I think of you so very often and of the three ears I spent at your school because it is such a joy not be to there any longer and if one is at all down it bucks one up derectly to remember that thats all over atanyrate and that one has enough food to nurrish one and not that awful monottany of life and not the petty fogging daily tirrany you went in for and I can imagine no greater thrill and luxury in a way than to come and see the whole dismal grind still going on but without me being in it but this would be rather beastly of me wouldnt it so please dear Miss Price dont expect me and do excuse mistakes of English Composition and etcetra in your affectionate old pupil,

Emily Therese Lynn-Royston

ps, I often rite to people telling them where I was edducated and highly reckomending you.[1]

The overcrowded sentence. Less obvious than the fault of trying to combine heterogeneous items, but far commoner, is the fault of crowding too many related statements together in a single sentence. Whatever goes into a sentence should in some way help to develop, clarify, or emphasize the main idea; mere relationship is not of itself sufficient warrant for the inclusion of any given phrase or clause. The phrase or clause that does not help is liable to hinder—to distract the reader's attention from the real thought of the sentence. A sentence may be so spun out as to have more than one subject or one main idea; e.g.:

[1]Max Beerbohm, "How Shall I Word It?"

1. One of the notable artists of today in the American magazine world is Charles Dana Gibson, who has recently returned to the pen and ink sketches of people which have delighted so many persons, after a sojourn in France, where he studied portrait painting.

2. The Club has built a dam south of the club house at considerable expense and a pond is now flooded and the members can enjoy skating day or evening when the weather permits, and it is hoped that all members will make use of this added attraction.

These sentences offer the reader no particular difficulty, but they are "fuzzy," as photographers say of pictures that have no distinctness of outline. We suspect that the author of Example 1 had only a vague notion of what the main idea of his sentence was to be, and that the author of Example 2 began his sentence with a very hazy idea of how he was going to end it. The sentence that follows is a more striking example of overcrowding and illustrates the way in which related, but unessential, statements may draw the reader's attention away from the subject. The sentence ends a discussion as to what portions of *Eastward Ho!* may be assigned to each of its joint authors, Jonson, Chapman, and Marston:

Other such points might perhaps be discovered; but on the whole we may probably feel safe in assigning to each of the three associates as equal a share in the labor and the credit as they bore in the peril entailed on them by a comedy which, though disclaiming all unfriendly aim at rivalry with one of similar title already familiar to the stage, must probably and deservedly have eclipsed the success of two plays not published till two years later under cognate names by Dekker and Webster; though the plot of *Northward Ho!* is not wanting in humor and ingenuity, and in *Westward Ho!* there is one scene of exquisite and incongruous beauty in which we recognize at once the tender and reckless hand which five years earlier had inserted into the yet more inappropriate framework of the *Satiromastix* as sweet an episode of seeming martyrdom and chastity secured under the shelter of a sleep like death.

Finally we come to the overloaded sentence in which the main idea is befogged by too many subordinate clauses. This type imposes an undue strain on the reader's mind, requiring too much mental exercise to unearth the main idea. As the saying is, one cannot "see the wood for the trees." In the first of our examples this tendency is in the bud; in the second, it is in full flower:

1. One who is accustomed to observe how a language changes in the course of centuries; how speakers in one age, or in one province, naturally acquire habits of speech which differ widely from those which obtain at other times and in other geographical areas; how a community tends to modify its speech now in one direction, now in another, sometimes owing to social or other conditions which can be traced, sometimes without any discoverable external cause, one who is an unprejudiced student of the development of human culture as it is expressed in spoken language, is unwilling to assert that one line of development is "good," while another is "bad," or to dogmatize as to what ought to be the form which language shall take.

2. Stated thus, the principle may seem very simple and insignificant. But anyone who has read the volumes of this series, and observed the applicability of the principle to all possible effects of form in all the arts, together with the way in which analogous effects in different arts have been correlated to one another; and who has observed, also, the applicability of the principle to the mental effects of art, whether produced by the grandest generalizations that can broaden thought, and the profoundest passions that can excite emotion, or only by the smallest specific accent of a syllable, the measuring of a tone, the shading of a line, or the turning of a little finger—anyone who has observed these facts, and is at all appreciative of the vastness and complexity of the subject, or is acquainted with the chaotic conditions in which the histories of opinions have left men's common conceptions of it, or is merely aware of that which, in general, is the distinctive aim of all philosophical analysis—any such man will recognize the degree in which, when the elements investigated are made to seem single and simple, the comprehensiveness and importance of the discussion are enhanced.

EXERCISES

(*a*) Point out any lack of unity in the following sentences, and in each case suggest a remedy:

1. The word is unknown, I think, in England. Unknown in the usage of the educated. Perhaps also in the usage of the uneducated.

2. In 1852 Morris went up to Oxford. He went at the beginning of June. At that time he passed the matriculation examination. The examination was for entrance to Exeter College. This with the view of going into residence after the Long Vacation.

3. Look at the Kankakee basin over in Indiana. Just being awakened. Awakened after the sleep of centuries.

4. We progressed up the coast of Queensland. It is a magnificently rugged coast. The farther we progressed, the more varied became the people on our passenger list.

5. The entrance to this harbor is wide. It is fully half a mile wide. So how the captain contrived to pile his vessel securely on the reef is something of a mystery. His vessel was a French gunboat.

6. There are only two things that the Spaniard takes seriously. That is, really seriously. These are his love and his bull-fights.

7. She was a very charming old lady. She was, too, very vivacious. She had spent most of her early life in the country. She once said that the keenest pleasure of her childhood was the occasional arrival of her mother's guests. She also said that the keenest regret was their inevitable and too speedy departure. These things she said to me.

8. He declared that he was innocent. That the evidence against him was a "frame-up."

9. The merchant or manufacturer who, compelled by competition, booms a worthy article which he himself believes in, is beyond criticism, and legitimate advertising, at its best, approaches high art.

10. In the quaternary period, horses, cattle, and goats existed both in England and in France, but as wild animals; man had not domesticated them, and ignorant of agriculture, he lived solely on the fruits of plants and the spoils of hunting and fishing.

11. Although Weymouth, in common with all seaside places. will suffer to some extent by the withdrawal of railway excursion facilities, the sea-front is quite as animated as in previous Junes, and people taking their early holidays are finding their way to the Wessex Coast, for Weymouth is well out of the war zone, and municipal and private enterprise is providing plenty of amusements, and, altogether, visitors have many inducements to spend their holidays at this favorite Western resort.

12. The amateur performance of *Pygmalion* given in Carleton Hall was very well carried out, especially in the women's parts, and the orchestra was surprisingly good, and accommodating, too, for after the play the musicians stayed on and gave us several dances, in which nearly everyone, including most of the older people, joined, so that the affair was turned into an impromptu ball and wound up with a burst of gayety that pleased even the natives, who were a little shy at first but were soon thawed out so that they joined in the fun as heartily as the summer people.

13. Under the three great leaders, the triple heroes of Britain —Saint Patrick, John Knox, and Oliver Cromwell—and their successors, have grown the strongest and most predominant force of men whom the world has ever known; further, blended and commingled with a strong admixture of the sturdy Germanic, have produced the American, the strongest individual character and manhood in existence—all of whom, if true to their lineage and exalted conditions, if their cursed drink habits were abated, would carry, not a plundering, but a pure, Christian civilization all over the world.

14. We draw our supply of water from a clear, bubbling spring conveniently located on the hill back of the house, and we have a new two-car garage.

15. When our acquaintances had seated themselves in Knoller's principal room and had ordered dinner, they entered

into conversation, McFee talking loudly and fervently about the lofty significance of the Imagists, but soon falling silent, and noisily sighing and chewing, clinking glass to glass, while Ober ate and drank little, and having questioned Marvis as to the nature of his occupation, began to express his own opinions, suddenly growing animated and starting off at full gallop, like a good horse, adroitly and sharply emphasising every syllable, every letter, like a fine dashing young cadet at his final examination, and waving his arms violently, but not in accord, became momentarily more voluble, more energetic, as no one interrupted him, and the effect was exactly as though he were reading a dissertation or a lecture, for the names of all the newest savants, with the year of each one's birth or death added, and the titles of pamphlets which had just been published, fell thick and fast from his lips, affording him the highest gratification, which was reflected in his flashing eyes.

16. The shipment North of the best oranges begins about December first, and in a good season the owner of a thriving grove makes a handsome profit.

(*b*) Divide the following passage into sentences as unified as you can make them without altering the text. Supply internal punctuation wherever it is needed.

We are accustomed to speak with a certain light irony of the tendency which women have to gossip as if the sin itself if it is a sin were of the gentler sex and could by no chance be a masculine peccadillo so far as my observation goes men are as much given to small talk as women and it is undeniable that we have produced the highest type of gossip extant where will you find in or out of literature such another droll delightful chatty busybody as Samuel Pepys, Esq. he is the king of tattlers as Shakespeare is the king of poets.

If it came to a matter of pure gossip I would back Our Club against the Sorosis or any women's club in existence whenever you see in our drawing-room four or five young fellows lounging in easy-chairs cigar in hand and now and then bringing their heads together over the small round Japanese table which is always the pivot of these social circles you may be sure that they are discussing Tom's engagement or Dick's extravagance

or Harry's hopeless passion for the younger Miss Fleurdelys it is here old Tippleton gets execrated for that everlasting *bon mot* of his which was quite a success at dinner-parties forty years ago it is here the belle of the season passes under the scalpels of merciless young surgeons it is here B's financial condition is handled in a way that would make B's hair stand on end it is here in short that everything is canvased everything that happens in our set I mean much that never happens and a great deal that could not possibly happen it was at Our Club that I learned the particulars of the Van Twiller affair.

II. Coherence

Coherence dependent on sound grammar and clear thought. A coherent sentence is a unit composed of well-adjusted parts; its parts are properly related to one another, and their relation is made evident to the reader. The right adjustment of the parts is in some degree a matter of syntax, in some degree a matter of logic. That is, coherence in the sentence usually implies sound grammar and sound thought. In dealing with coherence therefore, we shall touch on some points of grammar; but in doing so our interest will be in clearness rather than in grammatical usage.

1. Arrangement

The principle of coherent arrangement. The guiding principle of coherent arrangement is that words closely related in thought should be placed close together. Failure to observe this principle leads to incoherence—sometimes so slight as scarcely to affect clearness, sometimes so serious as to make a sentence ambiguous or obscure. In the sentence at the top of the next page, for example, faulty arrangement may cause some confusion in a reader's mind:

If you take this street, turning to the left, three blocks further, at Market Square, on the right-hand side, near the corner, you will find Flint's Emporium, two blocks down.

One may have to read this two or three times before its meaning becomes perfectly clear to him.

Complete ambiguity, as a result of faulty arrangement, is exemplified in the following sentence:

It was none other than Silas Updike, son of old Adrian Updike, the master forester, and his wife, Lucy, the gamekeeper's daughter, who had once shown us the way to the Whispering Spring.

Was Silas the master forester, or was Adrian? Was Lucy the wife of Silas, or of Adrian? From the sentence itself we get no answer to these questions.

Common forms of incoherent arrangement. (*a*) Of single words whose position in the sentence has an important bearing on clearness, perhaps the most troublesome are *only*, *alone*, *also*, and *even*. A misplaced *only* may change the meaning of a sentence.

In the following sentences we may observe how radically the meaning changes when such words as *only* and *even* are shifted from one position to another:

1. Only John offered to buy the horse. (No one else offered.)

2. John only offered to buy the horse. (He did not buy it.)

3. John offered to buy only the horse. (He made no offer for the harness or the wagon.)

4. Even Smith could bully Atkins. (Anybody could.)

5. Smith could even bully Atkins. (Smith could tease him, annoy him, and even bully him.)

6. Smith could bully even Atkins. (Smith was cock of the walk.)

(*b*) It is well to avoid putting words into a false series:

Owing presumably to an error of Malone, Dyce, Lowndes, Grosart, Dr. Ward, and others, have recorded an edition of 1599.

As one reads this sentence for the first time, what is there to tell him that "Malone" and "Dyce" are not coördinate? It would have been better had the writer broken up the series. He might have written "Malone's" instead of "Malone"; or, better still, have kept Malone's name apart from the others in some such way as this:

Owing presumably to an error of Malone's, an edition of 1599 has been recorded by Dyce, Lowndes, Grosart, Dr. Ward, and others.

(*c*) The so-called "squinting construction," in which a word, phrase, or clause may be coupled with what precedes or with what follows, is almost always ambiguous.

This queer family consisted of five persons: the old man, his wife, and his daughter, a fool, her son, and a little boy of ten.

Here, because the phrase "a fool" may be in apposition with "his daughter" or with "her son," confusion arises.

When his unpopularity increased, in spite of his efforts to explain the situation, the captain had him transferred to another battery.

Did the captain have him transferred in spite of his efforts to explain? Or did his unpopularity increase in spite of his efforts? In either of the following rearrangements the meaning is unmistakable:

1. When, in spite of his efforts to explain the situation, his unpopularity increased, the captain had him transferred to another battery.

2. When his unpopularity increased, the captain had him transferred to another battery in spite of his efforts to explain the situation.

(*d*) In general, it is inadvisable to separate related words by intervening phrases or clauses. Modifiers should be placed as close as possible to the words they modify. There is little to be said for such dislocations as these:

1. Tammany Leader Murphy arose and announced that New York cast its ninety votes for Harmon amid hisses.
2. I'll spoil the beauty that made me love you with vitriol.
3. He shot himself through the heart after bidding his wife good-by with a revolver.

In longer sentences separation of related elements is more likely to occur, and more likely to cause confusion. Many readers would have to pause over the following sentence to bring together its scattered parts:

Through patriotic motives he struck the most decisive blow against conspiring treason, with the astonishing result of changing the treacherous, secession-hatching policy to inoffensive loyalty, of the Administration, when he resigned from Zabriski's Cabinet.

A coherent arrangement will manifestly improve the sentence:

When, through patriotic motives, he resigned from Zabriski's Cabinet, he struck a most decisive blow against conspiring treason, with the astonishing result that the Administration's treacherous, secession-hatching policy was changed to one of inoffensive loyalty.

We shall not attempt to illustrate here all the possible varieties of incoherent arrangement. Suffice it to say that ordinarily a dependent clause should stand next to the element on which it depends; that appositives should be placed side by side; that parenthetical statements should be introduced at points where they least interrupt the flow of thought; and that a noun and its limiting phrase or clause should no more be torn apart than a noun and its adjective, or a verb and its adverb.

2. Reference

Clearness of reference. It is a rule of grammar that all reference words should have definite grammatical antecedents. It is a rule of good style that these antecedents should be unmistakable. Every reference should be so clear that the reader does not have to stop to puzzle it out for himself. Whenever there is the slightest doubt about the word to which a pronoun, pronominal adjective, or adverb refers, clearness demands that the word be repeated, or that a synonym be used, or that the sentence be reconstructed.

Common faults of reference. (*a*) Ambiguity is caused by two or more possible antecedents. What, for instance, is the antecedent of the *it* which begins the last sentence in the following paragraph?

> What gave Shakespeare all this attainment in one of the most difficult of dramatic forms, the other being tragedy? The toilsome acquirement we have been watching of the power to set more and more perfectly comprehended character, even in its subtlest moods of gayety, in a story of absorbing interest woven from many strands. It resulted from trained interest in character, trained poetic power, perfect technique gained from training, and from an almost uncanny knowledge of human nature, again the result of patient training of an originally keen sympathy guided by a maturing sense of humor.

In the next example the reference of the pronouns is so indefinite and confusing that the second sentence is meaningless:

> Mrs. Smith knew Mrs. Herman very well. She was a great friend of her eldest sister, and used to visit her father's house when she was a girl, before she was married.

(*b*) It is not advisable to repeat a pronoun and at the same time change the antecedent:

But during the last fifty to one hundred years the agency which has been the favorite one to accuse of corrupting the language is the newspaper. Its influence upon it has been described as pestilential.

In this instance a reader would have little or no difficulty in straightening out the reference, but he would be certain to notice the bungling. The change of antecedent in the following example might cause some confusion:

"An apparent good," as Aristotle says, "is the spring of all human action." When the "apparent good" of a nation can be obtained by peace, then men desire it; if it, supposedly, can be attained only by war, then men desire it, or accept it, which comes to the same thing.

"It" is badly overworked, being made to refer to "apparent good," "peace," and "war." If the second sentence were altered to read somewhat as follows, it would gain in coherence:

When the "apparent good" of a nation can be obtained by peace, then men desire peace; when, supposedly, the "apparent good" can be attained only by war, then men desire war, or accept it, which comes to the same thing.

(*c*) It is well to avoid making a shift of subject by means of a reference-word:

If the baby does not thrive on fresh milk, it should be boiled.

The sentence should, of course, read this way:

If the baby does not thrive on fresh milk, the milk should be boiled.

3. Coördination and Subordination

Connectives. An intelligent use of connectives is a most valuable means of securing coherence. Conversely, a thoughtless use of them is a sure cause of incoherence.

Connectives are divisible into two groups: one, the coördinating, which express equality between the elements they join together; the other, the subordinating, which show that one of the elements is subordinate to the other. We shall consider these groups in turn.

Coördinate relations. Four kinds of coördinate relation may be distinguished:

(*a*) The simple addition of one element to another:

1. He fell *and* broke his arm.
2. The whistle sounded, *and* we leaped from our trenches.

This relation is expressed by *and;* it may also be expressed by *also*, *besides*, *furthermore*, *likewise*, and *moreover*, which are weaker in conjunctive force. To strengthen them, *and* is often added:

Tell him what I say; *and furthermore*, tell him that I mean it.

(*b*) Consecutiveness, one circumstance or idea following another as natural or logical consequence:

The angle ABC coincides with the angle DEF; *hence* the angles are equal.

This relation is expressed by *accordingly*, *consequently*, *hence*, *therefore*, *thereupon*, etc., either alone or with *and*.

(*c*) Correlatives, statements that are complementary, or so closely related that they may be yoked together. Note the examples on the following page:

1. There is *not only* disgrace and dishonor in that, *but* an infinite loss.
2. They gave him *neither* help *nor* encouragement.

Correlation is expressed by *as . . . so, both . . . and, either . . . or, neither . . . nor, not only . . . but* (*also*), *the one . . . the other, the . . . the* (with comparatives), etc.

(*d*) Adversative, one statement being set off against another:

1. The proofs may not yet be complete, *but* they grow day by day.
2. I leave; *yet* I do not leave willingly.

This relation is expressed by *but, however, nevertheless, notwithstanding, on the contrary, still, yet,* etc.

Proper coördination. (a) *Coördinating equal elements.* Our first care in seeking proper coördination is to make sure that the elements we desire to link together are substantially equal in importance and express ideas of the same general type. The coördination of one word with another, or one phrase with another, seldom offers any difficulty in this respect; clauses, however, require more careful attention. As children we were apt to make most of our statements coördinate, and some of us are slow to outgrow this habit:

I debated what I should talk about this evening, and I chose the subject of tiger-hunting, and I happen to know something about it, and thought it might interest you.

This is clear enough in one sense: a child could understand it. But a mature and trained mind would not rest satisfied with such a sentence because the logical relations of the

parts are left unexpressed. The thought has not been shaped into a coherent unit. Probably the real meaning of the sentence is something like this:

After debating what I should talk about this evening, I chose the subject of tiger-hunting because I happen to know something about it and thought it might interest you.

The last two clauses are rightly made coördinate because they express ideas of the same general kind—reasons why the speaker chose tiger-hunting for his subject.

Coördinate elements, furthermore, should normally have equal grammatical value; that is, should be alike in function. An independent clause may properly be coördinated only with another independent clause; a relative clause, only with another relative clause; an infinitive phrase, only with another infinitive phrase; a participle, only with another participle; a noun, only with another noun, and so on. Faulty coördination, and its correction, may be observed in the following:

1. He is an excellent leader—strong, just, and who may be depended upon. (In place of the relative clause put *dependable*.)
2. Martin walked slowly along the Mall, and surveying the passers-by with a critical stare. (Omit *and*, or change *surveying* to *surveyed*.)
3. The closing and best game of the series was played by Upton and Mitchell. (Put *last* in place of *closing*.)

(b) *Using the right connective.* We have seen that there are four kinds of coördinate relation, each one having its own group of connectives. We should keep clearly in mind the distinctive meanings of these words, and try to use them with discrimination. Read carefully the illustration at the top of the next page.

The ancient rhetoricians distinguished many forms of figurative expression besides similes and metaphors, and the general feeling now is that it is not necessary to attempt minute discrimination in such matters.

The use of *and* to connect the main clauses of this sentence obscures the real relation between them, which is one of opposition; *but* instead of *and* would make the relation immediately clear.

Subordinate relations. Of the various relations of subordination we shall here note seven of those most commonly used:

(1) Time:

1. Please lock the windows *before* you go out.
2. *Till* thou speak, thou shalt not pass from hence.

Time is expressed by *as long as, as often as, as soon as, after, before, during, ever since, just as, now that, previous to, prior to, subsequent to, till, until, when, whenever, while,* etc.

(2) Condition:

1. *If* thou wert the lion, the fox would beguile thee.
2. *In case of* doubt, play trumps.

Conditional statements are introduced by *if,* most commonly, and by *but for, but that, except for, in case, in case of, in case that, provided that, unless, without,* etc.

(3) Cause:

1. They dare not fight with me, *because* I am the stronger.
2. Give me food, *for* I am hungry.

Cause is expressed by *for* and *because,* and by *for the sake of, inasmuch as, in view of, on account of, on the score of, seeing that, since,* etc.

(4) Purpose:

1. He exercises regularly *in order* to keep in good condition.
2. They gave their lives *that* France might be saved

Purpose is expressed by *for the purpose of, for the sake of, in order that, in order to, lest, that, to, to avoid* (with the gerund), *with a view to, with the intention of*, etc.

(5) Result:

1. The river was *so* deep *that* we could not ford it.
2. He has wit *enough to* keep himself warm.

Result is expressed by *enough . . . to, so . . . as to, so . . . that, such . . . as to, such . . . that, sufficient . . . to, too . . . to*, etc.

(6) Concession:

1. Speak sweetly, man, *although* thy looks be sour.
2. And yet, *for all* his wings, the fool was drowned.

Concession is expressed by *although, for all, in spite of, notwithstanding, though*, etc.

(7) Comparison:

1. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle *than* for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.
2. *The* harder we laughed, *the* angrier he became.

Comparison is indicated by *according as* (or *to*), *as . . . as, as compared with, as if, in proportion as* (or *to*), *like, rather than, than, the . . . the*, etc.

Proper subordination. (a) *Subordinating the right clause.* In striving for coherence through proper subordination we should first make certain that we are subordinating the right clause. The main idea of a sentence should not, as

a rule, be put in a dependent clause. Sometimes it is so placed through haste or carelessness:

"Have you ever seen a bull-fight?" asked Caroline.
"Yes," he replied. "I was in Mexico when I saw one."

From the context we may feel reasonably sure that what he should have said was "I saw one when I was in Mexico."

(b) *Using the right connective.* What was said about care in selecting the right coördinating connective applies with equal force to the choice of subordinating connectives. Lack of discrimination will surely result in incoherence. A careless writer may, for instance, use *as* to introduce any and every causal clause in spite of the fact that *as* by no means is always an exact equivalent of *because, inasmuch as, for,* and *since. As* may even be equivocal: "As you made the statement, I believed it." Does the subordinate clause mean "because you made the statement," or "in the way in which you made the statement?" Again, the careless writer makes undiscriminating use of *so* and *so that* to introduce clauses of purpose or of result. These conjunctions are so habitually abused that some scrupulous writers use *so that* only to introduce a clause of result, and never use *so* unless its meaning is unmistakably clear. It is well to guard against the ambiguity that follows an ill-considered use of these conjunctions:

He was standing near the door, it appears, so he could hear what was being said.

Does the second clause express purpose or result? The difference between intentional and accidental eavesdropping is usually worth noting. The simple remedy for such haphazard, trust-to-luck writing is to learn what each one of the more important subordinating connectives means, and then to abide by that meaning.

EXERCISES

Make the following sentences more coherent. The form of a sentence may be freely altered, provided that the meaning is not substantially changed.

1. Baby's health and happiness today and in years to come rest upon the nourishment he receives during the first few months of his life to a great extent.
2. Can a man who has withdrawn as a candidate agree to run over the telephone after the meeting has begun, or should he notify the secretary before the meeting starts?
3. Its function is to lay out the materials in orderly fashion with which the student is to work.
4. Immediately after the fire I urged the necessity of protecting the openings in the strongest possible terms.
5. The good baron found, while busy with all these laborious reforms, time to prepare a new code, based on Prussian experience, of discipline and tactics, but adapted to the peculiar conditions of American warfare; and this excellent manual, long after the death of its author, held, as the Blue Book of our army, its place.
6. The fire was extinguished before much damage had been done to the fence by our kind neighbors.
7. Of the little group thus left stranded in the desert, he was dismayed alone, for he was the one who only understood the danger.
8. Because of the injuries sustained by Patty, John, Phil, and Miss Houser were forced to drive on alone.
9. When he became unpopular with the men, in spite of his attempts to curry favor, the superintendent dismissed him.
10. Any plan that will accomplish these two things certainly is the one to adopt.
11. At the party I met Mrs. Bredon, a large and very mannish person, Mrs. Upton, and her daughter Clara.
12. Even in the case of an expert, problems are bound to arise on many occasions that are not readily solvable.
13. A man wandered casually into the central police station last night, expensively dressed but without any papers by means of which he could be identified, who could not remember his own name nor where he lived.

14. Such awkward errors, if you only remember that your words must fit what you mean to say, "cleanly adhering," in Stevenson's phrase, "like an athlete's skin," and must also be appropriate to your audience and the circumstances of your speaking, are easy to avoid.

15. Words may be under other conditions quite acceptable that are out of place in formal speech.

16. You will find it valuable to prepare a list and to indicate how often you have misspelled each, of all the words you have misspelled.

17. People who suffer from short breath more than others, and have not been in the habit of taking exercise, should commence them very carefully.

18. There may be within the confines of the epic, themes for a score of tragedies, but such a tragedy does not take for its subject the whole epic theme, for its scope is too vast for tragedy.

19. With however great a degree of justice and effectiveness these appeals to the courts may have been answered finally, the necessity of the public was such that it could not wait for them.

20. When her mother scolded her, she was angry.

21. He explained the causes of the discolorations of natural pearls, of which I had never heard before.

22. The queen who has given her name to our greatest age did comparatively little to make it so.

23. When a football coach comes to a college to develop a team, he may or may not have the material. Sometimes players are assured through means provided by the institution or its alumni; sometimes it has to be built up from the ground. It seems to be a fact today that it is as good or as bad as the alumni want it to be.

24. I never heard him make use of an oath in my life, and in youth he possessed the greatest spirits.

25. Gifts have been made by a number of alumni toward building the new stand, and the general body of alumni has yet to contribute.

26. It is impossible for any one individual to make such a canvass, but the coöperation of all is to be invited through the various alumni associations.

27. Burns was only a peasant, and one of no very elegant reputation as to morals, and he was made welcome to the homes of the Edinburgh magnates.

28. We hear nothing of Vaubert's father except that he was poor but of mean extraction.

29. Politics is perhaps the only profession for which no preparation is thought necessary; and Yoshida thought otherwise, nevertheless he studied the miseries of his fellow-countrymen with as much attention as though he had been going to write a book instead of merely proposing a remedy.

30. Because the younger students look up to him and seek his advice, he is wise and well-informed.

31. While yet a child my father and mother moved to Flatbush.

32. The *style periodique* is where the sentences are composed of several members linked together so that the sense of the whole is not brought out till the close.

33. He was a man of cultivated tastes, and who made the collecting of etchings his special hobby.

34. One of the most characteristic features in a dialect is the precise degree of rise or fall in the speaker's voice, which it would demand to express with exactness a musical notation.

35. Germany ought to be able to make substantial reparation payments, for they are a thrifty and industrious nation.

36. The holder of this ticket, when countersigned by one of our clerks, will receive a handsome souvenir.

37. Harry and the distinguished looking stranger moved over to a far corner of the gallery, where they could talk without being overheard. But I knew from his expression and gestures that he was apologizing for something or other.

III. Emphasis

What an emphatic sentence does. An emphatic sentence focuses attention sharply on its most important ideas. It gives prominence to those words that most deserve prominence. Thus it expresses its author's thought vigorously and forcefully.

Unity and coherence essential to emphasis. Unity and coherence are prerequisites to force in the sentence. Lacking the fundamental attribute of clearness, a sentence may throw into high relief a word or phrase here and there, but forcible or emphatic as a whole it will not be. Obscurity or lack of unity accounts for the weakness of the following sentences:

1. Among the residents in the neighborhood was the present Lord Coleridge, then quite young; and at home, as at school, Thackeray's quiet personality does not seem to have been one of those which leave tales to tell behind them.

2. Some of these serious articles deal in technical terms and demand great concentration, but these are decidedly in the minority, and the majority do not demand any more mental effort than is necessary to follow the antics of the characters in the customary love story, and I think they will interest you full as keenly once you get accustomed to reading them.

In the vast majority of sentences in ordinary prose mere easy intelligibility is all that is necessary; no special attention need be paid to securing emphasis. But if the idea to be expressed is relatively important, special means for obtaining emphasis should be used. Among the chief means are (*a*) strategic placing of important words, (*b*) periodic structure, (*c*) balance, and (*d*) climax.

(*1*) *Strategic Placing of Important Words*

The end of a sentence. The most prominent position in a sentence is the end, and consequently an important word put there is given the strongest emphasis. In the sentences on the top of the next page, observe, in 1a, 2a, and 3a, the increased emphasis given to "interminable," "beehive," and "Home":

1. The remainder of the drive was made interminable by this unmerited repulse and the constraint occasioned by Cantapresto's presence.

1a. This unmerited repulse, and the constraint occasioned by Cantapresto's presence, made the remainder of the drive interminable.[1]

2. There was in the garden one thing, the beehive, that shared his preference with his favorite cabbages and rhubarb.

2a. There was one thing in the garden that shared his preference with his favorite cabbages and rhubarb, and that other was the beehive.[2]

3. We cling with peculiar fondness to the sentiment of "Home," immigrants though we all are, and migratory as we have ever been—so much so that one rarely meets an American who was born in the house built by his grandfather.

3a. Immigrants as we all are, and migratory as we have ever been—so much so that one rarely meets an American who was born in the house built by his grandfather—we cling with peculiar fondness to the sentiment of "Home."[3]

The beginning of a sentence. The beginning of a sentence is also a position of prominence. It is not so entirely at the writer's disposal for purposes of emphasis as the end, because it is often used for articulation with preceding sentences, and because the usual order for clearness holds the subject at, or near, the beginning. But many sentences are needlessly clogged at the beginning by *moreover's, however's, therefore's, of course's,* and their fellows.[4]

There are two useful devices for increasing the stress thrown upon initial words. One of them is to arrange the parts of a sentence in such a way that the first word or

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[1]Edith Wharton, *The Valley of Decision.*
[2]Stevenson, *Memories and Portraits.*
[3]Bliss Perry, *American Idealism.*
[4]There are cases, be it understood, in which such words demand the emphasis given them.

phrase will be followed by a natural pause of the voice because there is a break in the flow of thought:

1. Booksellers, those proverbial grinders of the faces of poets, are not allowed to come between him and the profits of his Muse.
2. The State of Maine, famous for its crop of great men, its ships, its old-fashioned winter weather and numerous other merits, keeps many other laudable customs which are dying out or failing in less fortunate Commonwealths.[1]
3. Criticism, from whom they derive their claim to decide the fate of writers, was the eldest daughter of Labor and Truth.[2]

The other device consists in an inversion of the natural order, bringing to the front some word that ordinarily would not be found there:

1. Simple and luminous Bryant was from beginning to end.[3]
2. Love, as a motive of action for a woman, she considered the female's lunacy and suicide.[4]
3. Other secret for being "graphic" is there none worth having; but this is an all-sufficient one.[5]

Other emphatic positions. What is true of the beginnings and ends of sentences as positions of emphasis is true in lesser degree of the beginnings and ends of clauses within the sentence. In the following quotation the words *heaven*, *blossoming*, and *gladness* receive added stress because of the pause which follows them:

No cleaner or diviner waters ever sang with constant lips of the hand which "giveth rain from heaven"; no pastures ever lightened

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[1]New York *Sun*.
[2]Samuel Johnson, *The Rambler*.
[3]Barrett Wendell, *A Literary History of America*.
[4]George Meredith, *The Amazing Marriage*.
[5]Carlyle, *Biography*

in springtime with more passionate blossoming; no sweeter homes ever hallowed the heart of the passer-by with their pride of peaceful gladness—fain-hidden yet full-confessed.[1]

Furthermore, any word within the sentence is naturally given extra stress by the voice if it is followed by a pause due to an explanatory clause, a parenthesis, or other break in the sequence of thought. For this reason the word *she* in the following sentence is made to stand out altogether too prominently:

In giving an examination, she, in order to test their attentiveness and memory, asked them to describe the equator.

Coincidence of stress and meaning. The foregoing example of wrong stressing points to the value of writing for the ear of one's reader. Prose is never "finished" until its vocal accents coincide readily with the accents of its meaning. The best prose, as Meredith says of Congreve's dialogue, "may be read out currently at a first glance, so sure are the accents of the emphatic meaning to strike the eye, perforce of the crispness and cunning polish of the sentences." If the passages from Congreve, Milton, Johnson, and Emerson given near the end of this chapter be read aloud, the emphasis of the voice will be found to fall naturally upon those words which chiefly deserve it. Such coincidence of sound and sense is not a quality which will make vigor out of vapidity, but prose which lacks it can never rise above the level of mediocrity in form. Without a strong feeling for the rhythm of prose this coincidence is unattainable. But even a moderately trained ear will save us from such a glaring fault in emphasis as that cited at the end of the preceding paragraph.

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[1]Ruskin, Introduction to *Crown of Wild Olive.*

(2) *Periodic Structure*

Periodic and loose sentences compared. In the periodic sentence the grammatical structure is completed by the last word. Up to the very end the periodic sentence remains grammatically incomplete.

Whether words are uttered on paper or to the air, the effect on the utterer is the same.[1]

The final word in this sentence fills out the syntax, and is necessary to the construction. If the sentence should be changed over into the loose form, e.g.:

Whether words are uttered on paper or to the air, the effect is the same on the utterer,

it could end grammatically before the last word was reached, with the word *same*. In the loose sentence the idea is built up section by section; it is presented one part at a time. In the periodic sentence the idea is held in solution to the end, to be precipitated all at once by the final word. We may better grasp this distinction if we look at a more striking example of each type:

(*Loose*)

On their very first appearance our three adventurers met with a very bad reception; and soon with great sagacity guessing out the reason, they quickly began to improve in the good qualities of the town: they writ, and rallied, and rimed, and sung, and said, and said nothing; they drank, and fought, and slept, and swore, and took snuff; they went to new plays on the first night, haunted the chocolate-houses, beat the watch, and lay on bulks; they bilked hackney-coachmen, and ran in debt with shopkeepers; they killed bailiffs, kicked fiddlers downstairs, eat at Locket's, loitered at Will's; they talked of the drawing-room, and never came there;

[1] G. H. Palmer, *Self-Cultivation in English*.

dined with lords they never saw; whispered a duchess, and spoke never a word; exposed the scrawls of their laundress for *billet doux* of quality; came ever just from court, and were never seen in it; attended the levee *sub dio;* got a list of peers by heart in one company, and with great familiarity retailed them in another.[1]

(*Periodic*)

But when I consider O'Connell's personal disinterestedness—his rare, brave fidelity to every cause his principles covered, no matter how unpopular, or how embarrassing to his main purpose—that clear, far-reaching vision, and true heart which, on most moral and political questions, set him so much ahead of his time; his eloquence almost equally effective in the courts, in the senate, and before the masses; that sagacity which set at naught the malignant vigilance of the whole imperial bar, watching thirty years for a misstep; when I remember that he invented his tools, and then measure his limited means with his vast success, bearing in mind its nature; when I see the sobriety and moderation with which he used his measureless power, and the lofty, generous purpose of his whole life—I am ready to affirm that he was, all things considered, the greatest man the Irish race ever produced.[2]

The period an emphatic form. By virtue of its organization, the period is an emphatic form. All negations, all subordinate clauses, all modifiers, are put first to make room for the main statement at the end of the sentence—the position of greatest prominence. Furthermore, the suspense created by withholding the key to the meaning until the end is reached, concentrates attention upon the principal statement.

Long and short periods. The longer the period, the greater will be the suspense; and the greater the suspense, the more important should be the statement which ends it. If Wendell Phillips, in the sentence just quoted, had

[1]Swift, *A Tale of a Tub* (slightly condensed).
[2]Wendell Phillips, *Daniel O'Connell.*

been bent on declaring O'Connell a useful or valuable citizen, his long period would have been ridiculous. The mountain would have been in labor to bring forth a mouse. To create suspense when we are not prepared to give full satisfaction to it makes an anti-climax almost certain. The following is a typical example of the periodic sentence in which the main statement hardly seems to warrant the elaborate preparations for its advent:

> Always simple and always luminous, then, tenderly sentimental, melancholy, and sweet, given to commonplace didactic moralizing and coolly careful meter and rime, Bryant, a far from prolific poet, had done, when he came to New York at the age of thirty-one, as good work as he was ever destined to do.

We may take it as serviceable dogmas that the length of a periodic sentence should be proportionate to the importance of its main clause and that the short period is more generally useful than the long. The full weight of an extended period should be reserved for the weightiest things one has to say; otherwise there is danger of being heavy and pompous.

Formality. The periodic sentence is more formal than the loose. In colloquial speech the typical mode is to make a statement and then to give it such additions or modifications as it may require. The sentences, for the most part, are not thought through to the end before the first word is spoken, but are fashioned as the speaker goes along. Hence their structure is prevailingly loose. So it is with writing that aims at conversational ease and naturalness. The masters of this kind of prose—such men as Swift, Sterne, and Thackeray—are sparing in their use of periods, employing them only for occasional variety or for special

emphasis.[1] In general the periodic form is better adapted to exposition and argument than to narration and description; though it may be used to advantage in narratives and descriptions whenever there is need of making them especially dignified or impressive. Since it is more studied than the loose form, since it demands thinking ahead to the end of the sentence, it can rarely be made to look quite so artless unless it is brief. It is literary rather than conversational. But its compactness of structure, its clear differentiation between main and subordinate statements, and its telling emphasis, give it very great value.

Semi-periodic forms. Owing to lack of inflections, the strictly periodic form is not always possible in English. An attempt to write an extended series of periods, such as may be found in Cicero, is apt to result in some decidedly un-English constructions. But suspension of the thought, which is the essential quality of the period, is to be found in many grammatically loose sentences. One or more members of a compound sentence, for instance, may be periodic:

To say of a man that he occupied a high position in times of misgovernment, of corruption, of civil and religious faction, and that, nevertheless, he contracted no great stain, and bore no part

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[1]Sometimes Thackeray is able to retain much of his conversational tone even in such a long period as this:

> When the libertine hero carries off the beauty in the play, and the dotard is laughed to scorn for having the young wife; in the ballad when the poet bids his mistress to gather roses while she may, and warns her that old Time is still a-flying; in the ballet, when honest Corydon courts Phillis under the treillage of the pasteboard cottage, and leers at her over the head of grandpapa in red stockings, who is opportunely asleep; and when seduced by the invitations of the rosy youth she comes forward to the footlights, and they perform on each other's tiptoes that *pas* which you all know, and which is only interrupted by old grandpapa awaking from his doze at the pasteboard châlet (whither he returns to take another nap in case the young people get an encore); when Harlequin, splendid in youth, strength, agility, arrayed in gold and a thousand colors, springs over the heads of countless perils, leaps down the throat of bewildered giants, and, dauntless and splendid, dances danger down; when Mr. Punch, that godless old rebel, breaks every law and laughs at it with odious triumph, outwits his lawyer, bullies the beadle, knocks his wife about the head, and hangs the hangman—don't you see in the comedy, in the song, in the dance, in the ragged little Punch's puppet-show, the Pagan protest?

in any crime—that he won the esteem of a profligate court and of a turbulent people, without being guilty of any great subserviency to either—seems to be very high praise; and all this may with truth be said of Temple.[1]

Or, again, a sentence may be held in suspense until within a few words of the end:

There herds and flocks of goats and sheep, browsing under the shade of hanging woods, and the shepherd's little cabin, reared on the margin of a clear stream, presented a sweet picture of repose.[2]

Such sentences are very useful, as they help to preserve the balance between excessive informality, on the one hand, and excessive formality, on the other.

(3) *Parallel Construction*

What parallelism is. Parallel construction consists in giving similarity of form to those parts of a sentence that have similarity of function; that is, in phrasing "like ideas alike":

1. He that will not work according to his faculty, let him perish according to his necessity; there is no law juster than that.[3]

2. As no man had ever a point of pride that was not injurious to him, so no man had ever a defect that was not somewhere made useful to him.[4]

3. The world will little note, nor long remember, what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.[5]

4. Temple was a man of the world amongst men of letters, a man of letters amongst men of the world.[6]

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[1]Macaulay, *Sir William Temple.*
[2]Ann Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*
[3]Carlyle, *Chartism.*
[4]Emerson, *Compensation.*
[5]Lincoln, *The Gettysburg Address.*
[6]Macaulay, *Sir William Temple.*

Comparison and contrast. Parallelism is probably the most effective means of stating a comparison or a contrast. The neatly balanced antithesis in this sentence from Ruskin,

> We usually believe in immortality, so far as to avoid preparation for death; and in mortality, so far as to avoid preparation for anything after death,

drives home the thought with telling emphasis. But striking parallelism has its dangers. It may involve a sacrifice of truth for the sake of emphasis; because the number of ideas which may be set side by side in complete correspondence or in complete opposition, without distortion, is limited. Furthermore, the most emphatic, that is, the most complete, parallelism is so strongly marked that if it is overworked it makes one's style too rhetorical:

> It is better to die without money than to live without modesty. Put no more clothes on thy back than will expel cold: neither any more meat in thy belly than may quench hunger. Use not change in thy attire, nor variety in thy diet: the one bringeth pride, the other surfeits. Each vain, void of piety: both costly, wide of profit. Go to bed with the lamb, and rise with the lark: late watching in the night breedeth unquiet: and long sleeping in the day, ungodliness: fly both, this, as unwholesome: that, as unhonest.[1]

Less striking forms of parallelism. Parallel construction in its less striking forms is in constant requisition. In the following passage, for example, the parallelism is not very noticeable, but it adds much to the force:

> Every day sees a new field of facts opened up, a new method of investigation invented, a new department of knowledge established. And in the rush of it all these new sciences come merely as additions, not to be understood but simply numbered, not to be interpreted but simply listed in the great collection of separate fields of knowledge.[2]

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[1]John Lyly, *Euphues and His England.*
[2]Alexander Meiklejohn, *Inaugural Address.*

Our ingrained feeling for symmetry makes us demand parallelism in the details of a sentence if it resides in the thought. Similarity in correlative expressions, in appositional phrases, in a series of modifiers, and so on, is a characteristic of good writing demanded alike by coherence and by emphasis. It is an aid to ready comprehension. It makes for vigorous expression. Its absence is marked by a diminution of force, as the following pairs of sentences show:

1. It serves as a colorless link-word rather than to make a declaration.
1a. It serves as a colorless link-word rather than as a declarative.

2. A close search of his person was made by Sheriff Genung here yesterday, and the revolver found in a pouch of tobacco and the saws were sewed in his coat lining.
2a. A close search of his person, made here yesterday by Sheriff Genung, discovered the revolver hidden in a pouch of tobacco, and the saws sewed into his coat lining.

3. For a longer and spirited definition, cf Carlyle. *On Heroes*, Chapter III.
3a. For a longer and more spirited definition, cf. Carlyle, *On Heroes*, Chapter III.[1]

4. After this vexing delay we again proceeded on our journey, and our destination was reached without further incident.
4a. After this vexing delay we again proceeded on our journey, and reached our destination without further incident.

Example 4 deserves the student's particular attention because it illustrates a bungling type of sentence that is much commoner than it should be. The subject is shifted from "we" to "destination," and the voice of the verb is shifted from active to passive. Such shifts are sometimes

[1]If the first adjective in a series is in the comparative degree, we expect the others to be also in that degree. But if this would distort the meaning, the series should be broken.

convenient, even necessary—especially shifts of subject. But they lessen force by interrupting the flow of the sentence. It is well to avoid them as much as possible.

(4) *Climax*

What climax is. Climax in the sentence means the arrangement of parts in an order of increasing interest, importance, or vivacity. The sentence which has climax does not run down at the end; instead, it goes forward to a strong finish.

I looked upon the scene before me—upon the mere house, and the simple landscape features of the domain, upon the bleak walls, upon the vacant eye-like windows, upon a few rank sedges, and upon a few white trunks of decayed trees—with an utter depression of soul which I can compare to no earthly sensation more properly than to the after-dream of the reveler upon opium: the bitter lapse into everyday life, the hideous dropping off of the veil.[1]

This sentence has climax: first, in the arrangement of the details within the parenthesis; second, in the increasing power of the appositive statements at the end—(1) "after-dream of the reveler upon opium," (2) "bitter lapse into everyday life," (3) "hideous dropping off of the veil."

Varieties of climax. We shall have a better idea of climax and of its value if we look at several climactic sentences.

One hundred years after the establishment of our Constitution what purpose expressed in its preamble remains to be accomplished —what hope cherished by its framers is unfulfilled?[2]

This has climax because a "hope cherished" has greater emotional warmth than a "purpose expressed."

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[1]Poe: *The Fall of the House of Usher.*
[2]Bourke Cockran, *John Marshall.*

His humor delighting us still, his song fresh and beautiful as when first he charmed with it, his words in all our mouths, his very weaknesses beloved and familiar—his benevolent spirit seems still to smile upon us, to do gentle kindnesses, to succor with sweet charity; to soothe, caress, and forgive; to plead with the fortunate for the unhappy and the poor.[1]

By gentle gradations this sentence moves forward with gathering strength to its close; its emotional pitch is deeper at the end than at the beginning or in the middle.

There have been not a few since the beginning of this Parliament, both of the Presbytery and others, who by their unlicensed books to the contempt of an Imprimatur first broke that triple ice clung about our hearts, and taught the people to see day.[2]

The last clause, with its powerful figure—the meaning of which is more quickly caught than that of the preceding clause—is the strongest part of the sentence.

Climax comes, too, from a straight, logical progress of ideas to the main point, from a successive unfolding or expanding of the thought, from an increasing enrichment of the meaning as clause succeeds clause:

Take from the country at this moment the educated power, which is contemned as romantic and sentimental, and you would take from the army its general, from the ship its compass, from national action its normal mainspring. It is not the demagogue and the shouting rabble; it is the people heeding the word of the thinker and the lesson of experience, which secures the welfare of the American republic and enlarges human liberty. If American scholarship is not in place, it is in power. If it does not carry the election today, it determines the policy of tomorrow. Calm, patient, confident, heroic, in our busy and material life it perpetually vindicates the truth that the things which are unseen are eternal. So in the cloudless midsummer sky serenely shines the moon, while the tumultuous ocean rolls and murmurs beneath,

[1]Thackeray, *The English Humorists.*
[2]Milton, *Areopagitica.*

the type of illimitable and unbridled power; but, resistlessly marshaled by celestial laws, all the wild waters, heaving from pole to pole, rise and recede, obedient to the mild queen of heaven.

Brethren of Brown, we have come hither as our fathers came, as our children will come, to renew our observation of that celestial law; and here, upon the old altar of fervid faith and boundless anticipation, let us pledge ourselves once more that, as the courage and energy of educated men fired the morning gun and led the contest of the Revolution, founded and framed the Union and, purifying it as with fire, have maintained the national life to this hour, so, day by day, we will do our part to lift America above the slough of mercenary politics and the cunning snares of trade, steadily forward toward the shining heights which the hope of its nativity foretold.[1]

EXERCISES

(*a*) Point out such of the following sentences as are emphatic, and explain why; suggest improvements in those that are weak:

1. The French are beginning to comprehend the gravity of the Puritan; perhaps the English will end by comprehending the gayety of Voltaire.

2. It was Arnold's desire to have Browning succeed him as Professor of Poetry at Oxford; but Mr. Browning was not an Oxford man, and he was not elected on that account.

3. With a volunteer section, half French and half Senegalese, he, on the night of May 28, captured and held a Turkish fort.

4. He fell off the raft, nearly being drowned in the icy water, especially as he had on heavy felt and rubber lumbering boots.

5. If I have understood the last speaker correctly, his plan is thoroughly objectionable, according to my way of thinking.

6. If they could not find the Eskimo village, starvation would be the only thing left to them.

7. To err is human; to forgive, divine.

[1]George William Curtis, *The Leadership of Educated Men.*

8. His brief career in India showed him to be fawning and dishonest toward his superiors, inhumanly cruel to those in his power, and bad-mannered toward his equals.

9. The future stability and prosperity of anthracite mining will depend upon the coöperation of owners and miners, to a very considerable extent.

10. Failure to remove all traces of hypo from the prints by means of thorough washing will result in the appearance of ugly stains, not immediately, perhaps, but later on, at any rate.

11. A steadfast concert for peace can never be maintained except by a partnership of democratic nations.

12. My account of his adventures is necessarily imperfect, based as it is on scanty and incomplete records.

13. It seems to me that it was very impolite to speak to her as you did just before she left.

14. Of all the exquisite young women to be met with in Shakespeare's comedies, Viola is the most winning according to my own personal feeling.

15. The House galleries were crowded at the time, a terrific wind and rainstorm not having had any appreciable effect on the attendance, and Mr. Vreeland's statement caused a sensation on the floor, and also among the spectators.

16. And, nothing loath or timid, the student of Plato, Aristotle, Euclid, and Aldrich proceeded to lay down principles of art.

17. The instrument of proof is the moral character, when the delivery of the speech is such as to produce an impression of the speaker's credibility; for we yield a more complete and ready credence to persons of high character not only ordinarily and in a general way, but in such matters as do not admit of absolute certainty but necessarily leave room for difference of opinion, without any qualification whatever.

18. My favorite artists are Rembrandt, Raphael, and Howard Chandler Christy.

19. The famine of 1848 occurred during his childhood, leaving an indelible impression on his mind.

20. It is obvious that campers will favor this improvement because bungalows are more comfortable and convenient than tents in several respects.

21. He was charming toward boys, he loved the ways and the companionship of children; his affection for animals is described in Boythorn of *Bleak House* (taken from Landor with the genius and much else left out), who would declaim "with unimaginable energy" while his canary was perched on his thumb, Landor's favorite animal being, however, a dog.

(*b*) Make the following sentences periodic:

1. You cannot get into the senate-chamber unless you have a ticket.

2. I must defend my principles, although I hate an argument and would rather be shot than make a speech.

3. He might have passed if he had only given a little more time to his studies during the latter part of the term.

4. Then suddenly came the single, incisive stroke of a gong, cutting squarely athwart the crescendo of the raised voices.

5. The whirlpool, the great central force that spun the Niagara of wheat in its grip, would not thunder and bellow again till the following morning.

6. We shall find the greatest possible reason for gratitude and rejoicing when we consider the magnitude of the prize we contended for, the doubtful nature of the conquest, and the favorable manner in which it has terminated.

7. Those were no vulgar fanatics who roused the people to resistance, who directed their measures through a long series of eventful years, who formed, out of the most unpromising materials, the finest army that Europe had ever seen, who trampled down King, Church, and Aristocracy, and who, in the short intervals of domestic sedition and rebellion, made the name of England terrible to every nation on the face of the earth.

8. No doubt can exist as to the universal diffusion of education, the energy which is thrown into it, and the wealth lavished on it from sources public and private.

IV. Variety

Variety in length of sentences. (1) *For emphasis.* Variety in the length of sentences is a means of gaining force. In a paragraph made up of long sentences, a single short sentence will stand out from the others because of its difference. If we take advantage of this fact by packing into the short sentence an important statement—the gist of the whole paragraph, when this is possible—we thereby make the statement more emphatic. Note the distinction thus given to the last sentence in the following paragraph:

Esmond had left a child and found a woman, grown beyond the common height; and arrived at such a dazzling completeness of beauty that his eyes might well show surprise and delight at beholding her. In hers there was a brightness so lustrous and melting that I have seen a whole assembly follow her as if by an attraction irresistible: and that night the great Duke was at the playhouse after Ramillies, every soul turned and looked (she chanced to enter at the opposite side of the theater at the same moment) at her, and not at him. She was a brown beauty: that is, her eyes, hair, and eyebrows and eyelashes were dark: her hair curling with rich undulations, and waving over her shoulders; but her complexion was as dazzling white as snow in sunshine: except her cheeks, which were a bright red, and her lips, which were of a still deeper crimson. Her mouth and chin, they said, were too large and full, and so they might be for a goddess in marble, but not for a woman whose eyes were fire, whose look was love, whose voice was the sweetest low song, whose shape was perfect symmetry, health, decision, activity, whose foot as it planted itself on the ground was firm but flexible, and whose motion, whether rapid or slow, was always perfect grace—agile as a nymph, lofty as a queen—now melting, now imperious, now sarcastic—there was no single movement of hers but was beautiful. As he thinks of her, he who writes feels young again, and remembers a paragon.[1]

Had this final sentence followed several others of similar length, it would have been less emphatic. Had it been

[1] Thackeray, *Henry Esmond.*

one of a long series of short sentences, it would probably have been quite undistinguished.

(2) *For readableness.* Variety in sentence-length is necessary if we would attain readableness. Uniformity in the length of sentences soon grows wearisome, especially if the sentences are noticeably short or noticeably long.[1] Too many short sentences produce a disagreeable and jerky effect. The monotonous use of long sentences is equally to be avoided; taken in too large doses, they become soporific, disheartening. Even sentences of medium length grow almost intolerably dull or commonplace if too many of them are grouped together. In seeking variety in the length of our sentences, we should take a hint from the masters of prose, who blend long and short happily together, not in any set or mechanical alternation, but in an ever-varying pattern, shifting as the thought grows simpler or more complex, or the feeling grows warmer or cooler. This quality of variableness in sentence-length possessed by good prose cannot be satisfactorly illustrated in a passage brief enough for quotation here. We shall better appreciate it if we read attentively a chapter or two from such novels as *Vanity Fair* and *The Scarlet Letter*, or one of the longer selections in the Appendix—the one, for example, beginning on page 635.

Variety in structure. Variety in the form of sentences is just as necessary as variety in length. We should not allow any one type of construction to grow noticeably frequent. If we do, the shortcoming is our own, not that of the language. The number of possible combinations of words, phrases, and clauses is far too great to be exhausted by any single writer. Shakespeare kept to the literal truth when he wrote that "A sentence is but a cheveril glove to a good

[1]Read, for example, Exercise 1 (page 404).

wit"—flexible indeed, and to be turned inside out at will. We may get a slight hint of the wealth of possible combinations by glancing at some of the ways in which two simple statements may be expressed:

1. John violated the Honor System; he must be punished.
2. John must be punished; he violated the Honor System.
3. John violated the Honor System, and must be punished.
4. Having violated the Honor System, John must be punished.
5. John, having violated the Honor System, must be punished.
6. John must be punished for having violated the Honor System.
7. John must be punished for his violation of the Honor System.
8. For his violation of the Honor System, John must be punished.
9. John's violation of the Honor System must result in his punishment.
10. John's violation of the Honor System must not go unpunished.
11. Punishment must follow John's violation of the Honor System.
12. Because John violated the Honor System, he must be punished.
13. Because he violated the Honor System, John must be punished.
14. John must be punished because he violated the Honor System.

If to the two elements taken as a basis for these combinations we should add a third ("I am sorry to say," for example), we should have little difficulty in doubling the number of arrangements. Further computations may be left to those who like to make them. The point for us, as students of the art of writing, is that even plain statements may be made in such a variety of ways as to render a too constant repetition of any particular form of sentence totally unnecessary.

EXERCISES

(*a*) Rewrite the following passage in such a way that the sentences will have variety of length and structure:

When the news of the ratification of the Constitution by New Hampshire reached Providence the citizens resolved upon a demonstration. Nine states had accepted the instrument, which now, for those nine states, went into effect. The federalists increased their campaign, but with little success. The motions for a convention, though fruitless, were constant. In October, 1788, the motion was rejected in the house by a vote of forty to fourteen. In December it was rejected by a vote of thirty-four to twelve. Again, in March of the next year, it was lost by a vote of thirty-nine to nineteen. Finally, in October, 1789, the house defeated the motion by an even greater majority, thirty-nine to seventeen.

A critical change in the situation occurred when North Carolina ratified the Constitution as the twelfth state. Rhode Island was now absolutely alone. The leaders of the Federal Party girded themselves for a final spurt. The Assembly met by adjournment at Providence in January, 1790. The motion for the convention was made for the eighth time. A long debate followed. When the roll was called, the vote was thirty-four to twenty-nine in favor of a convention. The measure was then sent to the Senate for concurrence. After an all day's discussion the Senate voted for non-concurrence, five to four. Unwilling under the stress of such excitement to wait until Monday, the Assembly adjourned until Sunday. A "great concourse of people gathered to attend the session." Religious services in Providence were suspended. The resolution for the convention was again passed by the House and sent to the Senate for approval. As the story runs, one of the anti-federal senators was an out-of-town minister who thought his congregation needed him more than his party did. His desertion left a tie vote. The deciding vote rested with the Governor. Governor Collins was aware of the peculiar position in which the state was placed. Though a paper-money partisan and an anti-federalist, he voted to concur. Thus by one vote did the legislature grant the people the privilege of gathering in constitutional convention.

(*b*) Rewrite in several different ways the sentences given below:

1. Martin was sleepy; he could hardly keep his eyes open.
2. He is saving money in order to go to college.
3. No matter how lame you are, you must keep on walking.
4. If the wind shifts to the southeast, we shall have rain before sundown.
5. Her forehead was mild and benevolent between the smooth curves of gray hair; there were meek downward lines about her nose and mouth; but her eyes, fixed upon the old man, looked as if the meekness had been the result of her own will, never of the will of another.

V. Sound

Literature and plain prose. Our understanding of the part that sound plays in prose style will be clearer if we recall the fact that some prose is literature and some prose is not. In judging the one we necessarily take sound into consideration; in judging the other we do not necessarily consider sound at all. Our appreciation of literature is always partly aesthetic; whereas our appreciation of workaday prose may be wholly intellectual. An article in an engineering magazine on "A New Form of Coffer-Dam," or an article in a farm and poultry journal on "How to Raise Squabs for Market" may serve its purpose admirably and yet be wholly lacking in agreeableness or charm or beauty of style. The only source of charm in such an article, we might say, would lie in its clearness and general good workmanship. But the writer of even the most ordinary of ordinary prose should have what we may call a negative interest in sound—should try to avoid ugly combinations of words, or other offenses against the ear. He should at least seek to keep his style in that neutral region of prose in which the reader's hearing, though not distinctly pleased, is not tormented.

Rhythm. In prose there should be no such regular recurrence of accented and unaccented syllables as is found in verse.[1] The prose writer must avoid metrical effects as carefully as the poet seeks them. Combinations which have a singsong quality should invariably be broken up. "Nothing," says Professor Saintsbury, "degrades style so much as mincing or tripping effeminacy of movement."[2] We feel that he is right when we meet in prose such a tripping measure as this:

The grass was gray with drops of rain, the headstones black with moisture.

The movement in this sentence is altogether too sweet and sugary for good prose. The longer a metrical passage in prose is, the worse the effect. The italicized portion of the following passage is bad prose:

But confound it, while I ponder, with delicious dreams suspended, with my right arm hanging frustrate and the giant sickle dropped, with my left arm bowed for grasping something more germane than wheat, and my eyes not minding business, but intent on distant woods —confound it, what are the men about, and why am I left vaporing?[3]

All rimes in prose should be avoided because, for one reason among others, they accentuate whatever of meter may be lurking in a sentence. Thus in the following sentence rime accentuates the singsong of the movement, advertises it so effectively that few readers can miss it:

The use of a little skill and a great deal of care will usually result in a creditable chair.

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[1] "Measured intervals of time are the basis of all verse, and their *regularity* marks off poetry from prose; so that Time is thus the chief element in Poetry, as it is in Music and in Dancing." F. B. Gummere: *Handbook of Poetics.*

[2] George Saintsbury, *A History of English Prose Rhythm.*

[3] Quoted in William T. Brewster's *English Composition and Style.*

At the same time that we are weeding out tripping and jigging rhythms we should be on the watch for those which are awkward and jerky. A sentence which moves with a series of jolts, like a freight train getting under way, is no more useful than one which has some flow or continuity of movement, and is certainly much less pleasant. The following is an example of a bumpy sentence in which the reader is jolted along by needlessly parenthetical construction:

As they stumbled and lurched along past the mainmast, they could see, aft, his round, broad face with a white paper before it, and beside his shoulder the sleepy head, with dropped eyelids, of the boy, who held, suspended at the end of his raised arm, the luminous globe of a lamp.

The more we can smooth out such rough places, the better will be our style.

Euphony. Euphony means pleasantness of sound. It results from combining words in such a way that their sounds follow one another agreeably. For most of us the art of euphony will resolve itself into the simple problem of avoiding such combinations as are noticeably affected or disagreeable.

In general, it is good policy to revise for euphony when the repetition of a given sound becomes obvious enough to attract notice. This applies whether the repetition be of whole words or of initial or final syllables. The following is an example of what might be called a wanton harping upon a single word:

And with that happy smile beaming over that care-furrowed face, he signed that name that saved that life.

Alliteration is perfectly legitimate in prose until it becomes too conspicuous—as it usually does when several pairs of

alliterated words are found near together, or when more than two neighboring words begin with the same letter.

1. The lofty sweetness, the proud pathos, the sonorous simplicity of these most noble verses might scarcely suffice to attest the poet's possession of any distinguished dramatic faculty.
2. Then came a crash, and the sleds slowly slid sideways.

Alliteration is also intensified when the sound of the initial letter occurs within some neighboring word:

1. Begin to glide about the glade.
2. Its approval of principles which were presented.
3. Phases of physics sufficient.

Carried too far, alliteration becomes cheap and showy; as the following burlesque makes manifest:

With the weird imagination of a Poe, the joyous spirit of a Stockton, the poetic instincts of a Stevenson, the lurid facility of a circus poster-writer . . . he builded, beneath the bounding billows, a spaciously splendid world of wonders, a marvelous mansion of languorous luxury, a peerless palace of gorgeous grandeur perspectived with a panoramic pageantry of palms, and permeated, in short, with a passionate paroxysm of alluring alliteration.

Repetition of final syllables may be equally destructive of euphony and of that moderation, or restraint, which characterizes good modern English prose:

1. Then the Cat went forth to his hunting grounds again, and came home at night with a plump bird, reasoning with his tireless persistency in expectancy that the man would be there.
2. Their bark can hardly contain their spirits, but lies in folds or wrinkles about their ankles.
3. It is easy to see why he shirks the reading of Burke's works.

Vowels seldom destroy euphony. Among consonants *s* and *z* give the most trouble. *S* is very common, and is often hard to avoid, with the result that hissing combinations are among the most frequent violations of euphony:

I can do no better than quote Professor Herford's succinct synopsis.

The sound of *z* is not lovely and will scarcely bear immediate repetition. It may be over-nice to object to the repetition of *z* in a common phrase like *as is*, but it is not finical to object to more than one *as is* being used in a sentence of moderate length:

Dekker displays in his plays a most charming dramatic genius, a little, *as is* the wont of the time, chaotic and irregular, but sweet and pathetic, *as is* in no contemporary save the master of all, especially in the delineation of women's characters, while he has blank verse of such a quality *as is* seldom surpassed.

But euphony, like rhythm, cannot be reduced to rule. Any harsh combinations, whether they fall into the preceding categories or not, will be revised out of existence by the writer who has a moderately good ear and takes the pains to use it.

Beauty. The finest prose is musical and delights the ear. There are passages in Sir Thomas Browne's *Urn Burial*, Jeremy Taylor's *Holy Dying*, Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Thackeray's *English Humorists*—to cite diverse examples—which give aesthetic pleasure through beauty of sound, quite apart, one is tempted to say, from any beauty of meaning. But melody in prose does not really exist for its own sake. It is a false and misleading ideal, fraught with danger, to pursue beauty of sound as an end in itself, as though one were composing for violin or piano; from such

a mistaken aim there result weakness, effeminacy, and mere word-juggling. What Emerson says of poetry may be applied to prose:

> It is not meters, but a meter-making argument that makes a poem—a thought so passionate and alive that like the spirit of a plant or an animal it has an architecture of its own, and adorns nature with a new thing. The thought and the form are equal in the order of time, but in the order of genesis the thought is prior to the form.[1]

In the best prose the sound is an accompaniment to the sense.

Appropriateness is essential to beauty of style. The movement of the style must fit the thought or feeling to be expressed. Two quotations from Stevenson and two from Emerson will illustrate this felicity as it appears in phrases and single sentences:

1. Had this indeed been water . . . with what a plunge of reverberating thunder would it have rolled upon its course, disembowelling mountains and deracinating pines.[2]

2. Nor must it be forgotten that in all this part you come continually forth upon a hill-top, and behold the plain northward and westward, like an unrefulgent sea; nor that all day long the shadows keep changing; and at last to the red fires of sunset, night succeeds, and with the night a new forest, full of whisper, gloom, and fragrance.[3]

3. The day, immeasurably long, sleeps over the broad hills and warm wide fields.[4]

4. My house stands in low land, with limited outlook, and on the skirt of the village. But I go with my friend to the shore of our little river, and with one stroke of the paddle I leave the village politics and personalities, yes, and the world of villages and personalities, behind, and pass into a delicate realm of sunset and

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[1] "The Poet."
[2] Stevenson, *The Silverado Squatters.*
[3] Stevenson, *Memories and Portraits.*
[4] Emerson, *Nature.*

moonlight, too bright almost for spotted man to enter without novitiate and probation. We penetrate bodily this incredible beauty; we dip our hands in this painted element; our eyes are bathed in these lights and forms. A holiday, a *villeggiatura*, a royal revel, the proudest, most heart-rejoicing festival that valor and beauty, power and taste, ever decked and enjoyed, establishes itself on the instant. These sunset clouds, these delicately emerging stars, with their private and ineffable glances, signify it and proffer it.[1]

In 1, the sound of the words—*plunge, reverberating thunder, rolled, disembowelling mountains, deracinating*—is imitative of the natural sounds indicated; a correspondence known by the technical name of *onomatopœia*. The falling cadence of the last phrase in 2, "full of whisper, gloom, and fragrance" is perfectly fitted to the idea. The movement in 3, if the sentence be read aloud understandingly, compels the voice to linger. Contributing to this effect are the two pauses which break the sentence up into three word-groups, which grow successively longer. If we arrange the words in their more usual order so that the sentence reads, "The immeasurably long day sleeps over the broad hills and warm wide fields," we rob it of part of its beauty. Note, too, especially in the third group, that the proportion of syllables upon which the voice must dwell fully greatly exceeds those which it glides over or but lightly stresses. The slow, or delayed, movement of such a combination of strongly accented syllables as "warm wide fields" is noticeable. The last sentence in 4 seems to hold in its light and graceful cadences the airy holiday spirit of which Emerson speaks. In contrast with 3, the proportion of unstressed syllables here exceeds those which are heavily accented.[2]

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[1] Emerson, *Nature*.

[2] Using the common symbols of accent (˘ to indicate an unstressed syllable, ¯ to indicate a stressed), we may exhibit the movement as follows:

¯ ¯ ˘ ¯ ¯ ˘ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯ ˘ ˘ ¯

On a larger scale, we observe in the following passages a correspondence between form and content:

(1)

1. *Lady Wishfort.* But art thou sure Sir Rowland will not fail to come? or will he not fail when he does come? Will he be importunate, Foible? . . . I shall die with confusion, if I am forced to advance.—Oh, no, I can never advance!—I shall swoon if he should expect advances . . . I won't be too coy, neither.—I won't give him despair—but a little disdain is not amiss; a little scorn is alluring.

Foible. A little scorn becomes your ladyship.

Lady Wishfort. Yes, but tenderness becomes me best—a sort of dyingness—you see that picture has a sort of a—ha, Foible, a swimmingness in the eye—yes, I'll look so—my niece affects it; but she wants features. Is Sir Rowland handsome? Let my toilet be removed—I'll dress above. I'll receive Sir Rowland here. Is he handsome? Don't answer me. I won't know; I'll be taken by surprise. . . .

Well, and how shall I receive him? in what figure shall I give his heart the first impression?—there is a great deal in the first impression. Shall I sit?—no, I won't sit—I'll walk—aye, I'll walk from the door upon his entrance; and then turn full upon him—no, that will be too sudden. I'll lie—aye, I'll lie down—I'll receive him in my little dressing-room, there's a couch—yes, yes, I'll give the first impression on a couch.—I won't lie neither, but loll and lean upon one elbow, with one foot a little dangling off, jogging in a thoughtful way—yes—and then as soon as he appears, start, aye, start, and be surprised, and rise to meet him in a pretty disorder—yes—Oh, nothing is more alluring than a levee from a couch, in some confusion:—it shows the foot to advantage, and furnishes with blushes, and recomposing airs beyond comparison. Hark! there's a coach.[1]

(2)

O thou that after the impetuous rage of five bloody inundations, and the succeeding sword of intestine war, soaking the land in her own gore, didst pity the sad and ceaseless revolution of our swift and thick-coming sorrows; when we were quite breathless, of thy

[1]William Congreve, *The Way of the World.*

free grace didst motion peace, and terms of covenant with us; and having first well-nigh freed us from antichristian thraldom didst build up this Britannic empire to a glorious and enviable height, with all her daughter-islands about her; stay us in this felicity, let not the obstinacy of our half-obedience and will-worship bring forth that viper of sedition that for years hath been breeding to eat through the entrails of our peace, but let her cast her abortive spawn without the danger of this travailing and throbbing kingdom: that we may still remember in our solemn thanksgivings how for us the northern ocean even to the frozen Thule was scattered with the proud shipwrecks of the Spanish Armada, and the very maw of hell ransacked and made to give up her concealed destruction, ere she could vent it in that horrible and damnéd blast.[1]

(3)

Seven years, my Lord, have now passed since I waited at your outward rooms or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favor. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a Patron before. Is not a Patron, my Lord, one who looks on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labors, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a Patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself. Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favorer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long waking from that dream of hope in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation, my Lord, your Lordship's most humble, most obedient servant, Sam. Johnson.[2]

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[1]John Milton, *On Reformation in England.*
[2]Letter to Lord Chesterfield.

(4)

The history of persecution is a history of endeavors to cheat nature, to make water run up hill, to twist a rope of sand. It makes no difference whether the actors be many or one, a tryant or a mob. A mob is a society of bodies voluntarily bereaving themselves of reason and traversing its work. The mob is man voluntarily descending to the nature of the beast. Its fit hour of activity is night. Its actions are insane, like its whole constitution. It persecutes a principle; it would whip a right; it would tar and feather justice, by inflicting fire and outrage upon the houses and persons of those who have these. It resembles the prank of boys, who run with fire-engines to put out the ruddy aurora streaming to the stars. The inviolate spirit turns their spite against the wrongdoers. The martyr cannot be dishonored. Every lash inflicted is a tongue of fame; every prison a more illustrious abode; every burned book or house enlightens the world; every suppressed or expunged word reverberates through the earth from side to side. Hours of sanity and consideration are always arriving to communities, as to individuals, when the truth is seen and the martyrs are justified.[1]

In these passages, plainly, there are marked differences of quality: (1) has the movement of loose, excited chatter, (2) that of surging, tempestuous passion; in (3) the feeling is strong, but under rigid control; (4) is sharply and electrically incisive. The form of each is better adapted to its own content than to that of the others. We admire the strength, fine balance, and masterful sureness of Johnson's letter, but would not therefore have Lady Wishfort utter her trivialities in Johnson's manner; if she did, she would not be Lady Wishfort, but some other. Nor would we have Emerson exchange his hammer-stroke phrases, which express the intensity of his intellectual convictions, for the rolling, billowy phrases of Milton.

How shall we gain this power of fitting sound to sense? By striving for it. Rhetoric stops short of answering that

[1]Emerson, *Compensation*.

question more definitely, for the problem is nothing less than the working out of a man's own individuality into free expression. To "play the sedulous ape" may be a help to some writers, as it was, in Stevenson's opinion, a help to him. More tonic and heartening advice, for many, is Emerson's: "Rely on yourself; never imitate." One can, of course, train his ear and educate his taste through familiarity with the fine things of our literature. For these purposes poetry yields perhaps the richest results for a given time spent in attentive reading, because in poetry there is a marked concentration and heightening of linguistic beauty. Memorizing poetry is especially helpful in forming a good prose style. Only, let the poetry be of the best. No brief poem is better adapted to help the student than is Milton's *Lycidas*, since within small compass it shows surprising range and variety of expression, from lyric tenderness to intense indignation. With such genuine beauty familiar in the memory one is less liable to be misled by what is false, showy, or meretricious.

In Conclusion

An attempt has been made in this chapter to keep our discussion of the sentence within the bounds of what is requisite to a sensible and plain prose style. The one exception may be found in the cursory glance we have taken at the subject of beauty. Most of us, by nature and circumstance, have little or no concern with beauty when we write; our utmost aim is to be competent and workmanlike. But all of us ought to be able to recognize and appreciate beauty of form when it appears in some novel, essay, or short story that we are reading. And a few of us, possibly, will attempt to create it. At any rate, so brief a consideration of the subject has not, it is to be hoped, obscured the real purpose of the chapter—to point the way

toward the shaping of our sentences into clear and efficient units of thought.

But even though we have dealt almost wholly with the practical and the essential, ignoring many matters of interest to the professional writer and the critic of style, some of us may feel a bit discouraged at the prospect of trying to keep so many things in mind while writing a sentence. The feeling is natural, and comes to apprentices in other arts besides that of writing. To be conscious of too many "do's" and "don't's" while striving to put our thoughts on paper is decidedly confusing, and we find ourselves making but little headway. Fortunately it is not necessary to apply all our knowledge of the sentence at one and the same time. We may—and most of us should—divide our work into two stages: a creative stage and a critical stage. In the first draft of our work we should be chiefly concerned with what we have to say; as for our sentences, it is enough if they are roughly unified and coherent. To the finer points of unity and coherence we should at this stage pay little heed; and to emphasis, variety, and sound we should pay no attention whatever. Then comes the critical stage of our work when we begin to revise what we have written. We make sure that each sentence is a unit. We see to it that every pronoun has an antecedent, that there are no ambiguities or obscurities, and otherwise improve the coherence wherever necessary. Having satisfied ourselves that our revised version is clear, we go over it to make sure that our more important ideas or statements are given sufficient emphasis and that our sentences are not monotonously alike in length or structure. And finally, we read our work aloud to detect harsh combinations of sound and faulty rhythms. By this time our revised manuscript is no doubt so badly marked up that it must be copied.[1]

[1]Much time and labor will be saved if between the lines of our first draft ample space is left for corrections and additions.

In making a revision in the way suggested, we have gone over our manuscript at least three times with a different purpose in mind for each revision. To do this with any effectiveness has been a task—disagreeable to some, interesting to others, but still a task; it is silly to try to delude ourselves into thinking that good sentences will result from anything less strenuous than hard work. But it has been work without the confusion that leads to discouragement. We have not attempted to do too many things at one time. And as we go on writing we shall find that some things which now require our conscious attention will require it less and less. A practiced and competent writer gives very little thought, for example, to the fundamentals of unity and coherence: almost from pure habit, or a kind of secondary instinct, he excludes the irrelevant, brings related words together, puts his main idea in the principal clause, and so on. To the attainment of such mastery there is no short-cut; it comes from practice.

EXERCISES

Point out and correct faults of rhythm or euphony in the following sentences:

1. Now the agonies which affected the mind of Sophia rather augmented than impaired her beauty; for her tears added brightness to her eyes, and her color rose higher with her sighs.

2. "Ah, cool Kitty!" his hostess sighed again—but diverted, as she spoke, by the reappearance of her butler, this time positively preceding Lord Theign, whom she met, when he presently stood before her, his garb of travel exchanged for afternoon dress, with yearning tenderness and compassionate curiosity.

3. In the morning about ten o'clock, the sky having cleared, and the new tire, owing to John's exertions, being snugly on, and the small trunk, dust-proof, as we knew to our satisfaction, being lashed in place, we started.

4. It was a real provocation, for he had intended to attend the Convocation.

5. She did not take this behavior as an affront, but quite pardoned him for curving his arm in a hoop, and holding a shoulder in front.

6. Aside from the gain to the company in the greater lightness of these cars, these cars requiring less power to operate, these cars have several improvements on the passenger's behalf.

7. The occasion of the ensuing remarks is the demolition—no doubt, when they come to publication, accomplished or plainly impending, already, even while they are making, irrevocably determined—of "the earliest example of the skeleton construction, in which the entire weight of the walls and floors is borne by a framework of metallic posts and beams."

8. The spring was in our valley now; creeping first for shelter in the pauses of the wind. There the lambs came bleating to her, and the orchis lifted up, and the thin dead leaves of clover lay for the new ones to spring through. Then the stiffest things that sleep, the stunted oak, the stubby beach, dropped their brown defiance to her, and prepared a soft reply. While her over-eager children (who had started forth to meet her, through the frost and shower of sleet), catkined hazel, gold gloved withy, youthful elder, and old woodbine, with all the tribe of good hedge climbers (who must hasten while they may)—was there one of them that did not claim the merit of coming first?

There she stayed and held her revel, as soon as the fear of frost was gone; all the air was a fount of freshness, and the earth of gladness, and the laughing waters prattled of the kindness of the sun.

9. So we were compelled to go down the field and up it, striking in and out with care where the green blades hung together, so that each had space to move in, and to spread its roots abroad.

10. He is consistently and persistently insistent on having Mudge for his assistant.

11. There is no use in asking Sanders, for he thinks this is as bad as is possible.

12. The bad result is due, to speak justly, only partly to his folly.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ENGLISH VOCABULARY

Three varieties of English. An educated American makes regular use of three important varieties of English. The first of these is the colloquial, informal language of intimate talk or correspondence with family and friends. The second variety is the language peculiar to his occupation, whether a trade, business, or profession. Among those engaged in the same kind of work this technical language is the most direct and precise means of communication. The third variety, variously known as formal, literary, or standard English, is the language of books and of dignified speech. It is more dignified and conservative than is colloquial English; more widely and generally understood than is most technical English.

At the outset of our study of words we should keep this fact in mind: colloquial, technical, and standard English are separated by no hard and fast lines. They overlap at many points. "The English Vocabulary," says the Preface to the *New English Dictionary*, "contains a nucleus or central mass of many thousand words whose 'Anglicity' is unquestioned; some of them only literary, some of them only colloquial, the great majority at once literary and colloquial—they are the Common Words of the language." Whether we speak and write formally, informally, or technically, we draw constantly and heavily upon this stock of common words.

I. Colloquial English

Colloquial English not debased standard English. In familiar conversation it is a mistaken ambition that leads a man to "talk like a book." If his speech is naturally bookish because he is a bookish man, well and good; it can in that case have a literary flavor without sacrifice of such prime conversational qualities as spontaneity, liveliness, and ease. But conversation in general should be colloquial rather than literary. Some persons who model their speech on books do so under the misapprehension that colloquial English is a debased or corrupted form of literary English. On the contrary, literary English is derived from spoken English and draws much of its vitality from actual speech. "This matter," as John Synge puts it, "is of importance, for in countries where the imagination of the people, and the language they use, is rich and living, it is possible for a writer to be rich and copious in his words, and at the same time to give the reality, which is the root of all poetry, in a comprehensive and natural form."[1] Nor is there anything inherently vulgar in colloquial speech. Indeed, it is to persons of the most culture that one looks with the greatest assurance of finding a nice adjustment of language to occasion: racy and familiar speech in the intimacy of friendship; more formal, but still colloquial, speech in intercourse with new acquaintances or in general society; and formal, or "literary," speech in addressing an audience.[2] Speech, as Walt Whitman has said, "is something arising out of the work, needs, ties, joys, affections, tastes, of long generations of humanity, and has its bases broad and low, close to the ground." The better one understands the processes of language, the more strongly one will insist on

[1]Preface to *The Playboy of the Western World*.

[2]There are gradations of formality in "formal" speech, ranging from the conversation-like quality of Thackeray's lectures on *The Four Georges* to the unbending dignity of Webster's *Bunker Hill Oration*.

the right of colloquial speech to flourish side by side with standard English.

Colloquial and provincial speech distinguished. The speech of an ignorant man in its vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation is likely to be provincial. It contains many words and expressions that have a purely local meaning or currency, and many a purely local pronunciation. When the peculiarities of this speech are strongly marked, it is called a dialect. The Kentucky mountaineers, for example, have a dialect of their own; some idea of it may be gathered from this portion of a sermon delivered by a mountain preacher:

> Neow they's a heap o' people don't lack the doctrings of this hyur church cuz we teach predestination. Neow I wanter tell you, them folks is just lack a ole hoss that you've worked hard all day at the plow. You fotch him out at night an' you go fur to carry him home. An' you come nigh onter a ole stump a settin' by the side of the road. An' wen the ole hoss sees hit he stops. An' his yurs pints right straight at the stump, an' every har on his back pints right straight at his yurs, an' he says: "Thar he is, thar's the booger! Oh, he'll ruin me!" An' thar he stan's with his laigs stiff lack fence-rails, an' you cain't git him apast that ole stump. But ef you've got a good strong bridle, yer kin git him up fernent hit, an' then he gives a great snort, an' goes by hit with a jump. An' 'twarn't nothin' but a stump none of the time.

The Hoosier dialect, as James Whitcomb Riley reports it in *An Old Settler's Story*, has a different flavor:

> Well, as they fell I grabbed up a little hick'ry limb, not bigger 'n my two thumbs, and I struck Bills a little tap kindo' over the back of his head like, and, blame me! ef he didn't keel over like a stuck pig—an not any too soon, nuther—fer he had Steve's chunk as nigh put as you ever seed a man's, to come to again. But he was up th'reckly and ready to a-went at it ef Bills could a-come to the scratch; but Mister Bills he wusn't in no fix to try it over.

The Hoosier dialect in turn differs from the Yankee dialect that Lowell uses in *The Biglow Papers:*

> I don't appruve o' givin' pledges;
> You'd ough' to leave a feller free,
> An' not go knockin' out the wedges
> To ketch his fingers in the tree;
> Pledges air awfle breachy cattle
> The preudunt farmers don't turn out—
> Ez long'z the people git their rattle,
> What is there fer'm to grout about?

Anyone who travels from one section of the country to another may observe local peculiarities of the sort just illustrated. As a rule, the more restricted a man's social and geographical horizon, the more dialectal his speech.

Now the colloquial speech of an educated man is not prevailingly dialectal. It finds room for provincialisms, for ways of speech that are full of "local color," but it does so consciously, sometimes coupling them with explanatory phrases—"as they say in Seattle," or "in the words of my Adirondack guide." In vocabulary and syntax the speech of a cultivated man from California, Pennsylvania, or Illinois does not differ essentially from that of a Georgian or a Rhode Islander. Nor is this colloquial speech a class dialect. It is used by educated persons without regard to occupation or social position. Being free from the limitations of provincialism and class dialects, it is the most useful and widely understood means of informal communication. We find the flavor of the more highly colloquial speech of today (1926) in the following passage:

> . . . "Father is a sort of double personality. Privately, you know, dad is a cynical cosmopolitan, and he thinks America is a hick joint except for half a dozen of his own cronies. But you know how he stands in public, wrapping the flag about him, and doing the big bowwow at Japan and Mexico, and standing pat with

the pattest element of the Grand Old Party's patriots. Dad knows who cuts the melons. Dolly and I are sick of that. We want to come in on the ground floor and on the square. We want to have careers that we've made for ourselves, and not be handed something on a silver plate by one of father's friends. Then we are sort of sick of this 'cosmopolitan' stuff—which means only that you hate your own things and can't even smoke American tobacco unless it's been imported from England. We've got so tired of it that we are going to organize a new party with Flapjacks and Ham and Eggs for our slogan. The fact is, we get a sort of kick out of our feeling for the country—as our own, you know, a poor thing but our own; and we want to try and see if we can't be honest-to-goodness Americans before we die—if you understand what I mean."

"Bully for you!" I cried, in spite of my neutral intentions.

"But mother," he continued, "has been reading the Barsetshire novels all summer, and Trollope always makes her homesick for the 'old home.' She is crazy anyway over the English cathedral towns, and hopes to be buried in one when she dies. And just now she's got a kind of Golden-Age complex. She hopes to save me from democracy by sending me to one of the old Eastern colleges, where I shall associate with 'young gentlemen' from Anglicized prep schools, and live in a Gothic dormitory, and be tutored by Rhodes scholars, who are mostly nuts . . ."[1]

The colloquial vocabulary. (1) *Verbal novelties.* Everyday speech is full of new words and old words put to new uses. Some of these words pass, in time, into the formal vocabulary; others remain colloquial through generations of use; others are forgotten along with the occasions that gave rise to them. *Tawdry*, a contraction of *St. Audrey*, is an example of a colloquialism become standard. The word came to be applied to a kind of lace that was sold at St. Audrey's fair, on the Isle of Ely, and in other places in England, and then grew into use as a colloquial word applied to anything that was showy. From colloquial speech *tawdry* was adopted into literary usage. *To bark up the wrong tree* has long been

[1]Stuart P. Sherman, *My Dear Cornelia.* Copyright, 1924, Little, Brown and Company.

in colloquial use, but has never regularly taken a place in literary English. Such words as *locofoco*, in the sense of a member of the radical wing of the Democratic party in 1835, and *waterfall*, meaning a style of dressing the hair in vogue among our great-grandmothers, are examples of the once novel terms that have not survived in current speech.

In colloquial English the process of change constantly going on in all parts of the language is hastened and intensified. Conversation is closer to the event than is literature, and in familiar talk there are fewer restraints, fewer checks upon the craving for verbal novelties. Whereas standard English is conservative, colloquial English is radical, making instant use of the new word for the new thing, coining phrases for passing occasions such as political campaigns and social fads, and gleaning a part of the annual harvest of slang. Events that excite popular attention give rise to words that are eagerly seized upon for the moment, only to sink into "innocuous desuetude"—to use a phrase once heard frequently. Thus the British war in South Africa brought into temporary circulation such words as *aasvogel*, *kopje*, *trek*, *veldt*, *outspan*, *kraal*, *dorp*, *voorlooper*, and *biltong*. More recent examples are *communiqué*, *tanks*, *U-boat*, *Kultur*, *Taube*, *Poilu*, *Boche*, *sector*, *camouflage*, *Bolshevist*, *soviet*, *Hooverize* and *imagist*. No one can tell whether these latter words will prove to be temporary or permanent.

(2) *Colloquialisms of long standing.* Colloquialisms that have long been in use, but that have never risen to literary standing, form the second class of words in the colloquial vocabulary. Examples, in this case, are more enlightening than formal definition. There follows a short, but representative list:[1]

[1]The words and expressions in this list are classed as colloquialisms on the authority of the *Century Dictionary*. Certain of these expressions, such as "a blow-out" and "to pan out," might by other authorities be classed as slang. The line between colloquialisms and slang cannot always be drawn with exactness.

Colloquialisms of Long Standing

judgmatical
pernickety
hunk (=piece)
carryings-on
a bouncer (=a barefaced lie)
bossy (=domineering)
sea-legs
finicky
take back (=retract)
peter out
talk big
out of one's beat
to a degree (=exceedingly)
talky-talky
a crosspatch
to square off
a take-in
scrunch
plumb (=exactly)
a blow-out (=feast, etc.)
to blow (=brag)
duck ("a duck of a bonnet")
to come down with the money
to come out at the little end of the horn
dead beat (=very tired)
dead sure
to pan out
a clip (=a blow)
to peg away
to draw it mild
to draw it fine
bosh (=nonsense)
to boss one about
tea (used as a transitive verb)
a tearing passion
tear oneself away
tanglesome
to draw off (=prepare to strike)
a square meal
tea-things
not a dry stitch on him
claw-hammer (=a coat)
swell (=elegant, stylish)
to potter, or putter (=busy one's self with trifles)

Taken thus in a lump, such colloquialisms produce a slangy effect; used judiciously, they give raciness and spice to conversation. The writer, however, must remember that they are likely to trail with them undignified associations and hence should be used sparingly and with care for appropriateness. But the apt use of a colloquialism gives raciness to writing as well as to conversation:

> My cousin has a native disrelish of anything that sounds odd or bizarre. Nothing *goes down* with her that is quaint, irregular, or out of the road of common sympathy.[1]

[1]Lamb, *Mackery End, in Hertfordshire.* The italics are not in the original.

Popular vs. learned words. All the resources of English are open to use in colloquial speech, and so in one sense it is artificial to try to draw a line between groups of words that are all equally a part of our speaking vocabulary. A distinction exists, however, and in brief it is this, that some words are popular (that is, commonly used in speech) and some are not. In general, the popular or "speech" word is simpler in form than the learned or "book" word. But whether simpler or not, it strikes the ear as being more appropriate to ordinary conversation because of its familiarity or its intelligibility or its associations. One has no difficulty in deciding which of the following synonyms are the more natural to conversation:

1. They were standing in juxtaposition.
1a. They were standing side by side.

2. His house is next to mine.
2a. His dwelling adjoins mine.

3. Joseph Sedley led a life of dignified otiosity.
3a. Joseph Sedley led a life of dignified idleness.

4. This water has a slightly salty taste.
4a. This water has a slightly saline taste.

5. They have been making a great noise with their sham patriotism.
5a. They have been making a great noise with their pinchbeck patriotism.

6. No one could be more clumsy.
6a. No one could be more maladroit.

7. That was the most striking thing he said.
7a. That was the most salient thing he said.

8. The chapter-headings are printed in red.
8a. The chapter-headings are rubricated.

A better understanding of the distinction between popular and learned words will be gained by a comparison of the related words in the list that follows. All the words in the left-hand column are in both everyday and literary use; those in the right-hand column are usually, though not always, restricted to literary use.

growth	augmentation
satire	pasquinade
lying	mendacious
sensible	judicious
behead	decapitate
mercy	compassion
roomy	capacious
small	exiguous
sticky	viscid
beggar	mendicant
wealth	opulence
ask	interrogate
bloody	sanguinary
tear up by the roots	deracinate
wild	feral
truth	verity
dizzy	vertiginous
declare	asseverate
powdery	pulverulent
dissatisfied	malcontented
state of mind	mentation
stifling	mephitic
scope	purview
fit to drink	potable
to anger	exacerbate
harmless	innocuous
following	sequacious

A comparison of these two lists gives a hint of the truth that when we speak or write informally we use a relatively much smaller part of the standard vocabulary than when we speak or write formally.

EXERCISES

(*a*) Give three or four dialectal expressions from your native locality.

(*b*) Mention two or three recent colloquialisms.

(*c*) Point out all the provincial, dialectal, and colloquial usages in the following sentences:

1. He will come back inside of a week.
2. The cat wants in.
3. Such actions rile me through and through.
4. The child stole out of the house unbeknown to her mother.
5. You can't tote all that by yourself.
6. Phone me as soon as you get there.
7. The house was furnished very tastily.
8. I left just after they took up the collection.
9. Did you take in Detroit on your trip East?
10. Can you chuck a stone through that window?
11. We left the cabin half an hour before sunup.
12. And sure enough, there she was waiting at a bend in the road.
13. He puts lots of snap into his pitching.
14. Don't explain; I sense your meaning perfectly.
15. They were all pretty well tuckered out, I reckon.
16. He felt kind of doubtful about going.
17. I was raised in Indiana.
18. We were all glad to be quit of him.
19. She is thirteen years old, going on fourteen.
20. I shared my seat with a rough-looking party in a bear-skin coat.
21. You'll catch cold if you don't wear your gums.
22. This room is overly warm for comfort.
23. My mother bought that oil-stove off of a peddler.
24. They never gave me a fair show at that school.
25. He lives in a near-by village.
26. The baby was named for President Coolidge.
27. That's a mighty queer way to harness a horse.
28. He was middling tall, but very slight in build.
29. Jake was hopping mad because the hired man left the buggy out in the rain last night.
30. The children said that they had lots of fun at the picnic.

31. Hobson has decided to locate in Denver.
32. She may be rich, but she doesn't look it.
33. Leave go of me, you big brute!
34. Wait just a moment; I will be back right off.
35. Some movies are heaps of fun.
36. It is hard for him to get the hang of this subject.
37. He packed his grip in less than five minutes and then dashed out for a taxicab.
38. I guess I'll take Chemistry 21 next semester.
39. A fellow feels pretty tired at night after being on the go all day long.
40. As soon as I opened the gate, that little Irish terrier ran in and went for poor Miggles.
41. I disremember what day that was.
42. She was feeling first-rate when I saw her this morning.
43. Are you through with that book you borrowed last week?
44. The papers are featuring the baseball scandal just now.
45. The oldest boy favors his grandfather more than his father.
46. John will bring the car back pretty soon, no doubt; I expect he's had tire trouble.
47. I can't enthuse over tennis the way some people can.
48. She knows how to bake an elegant apple pie.
49. If you feel logy, go for a brisk walk.
50. You can't buy any liquor here, stranger; this is the dryest town in the state.
51. He dove overboard as soon as the first gun was fired.
52. A few difficulties can't faze him if he has made up his mind to do it.
53. I never get much rest when I spend the night in a sleeper.
54. He is very light-complected for an Italian.
55. You musn't park your auto so near that hydrant.

(*d*) Add examples to the list of colloquialisms given on page 425.

(*e*) Mention five or six words that have for you a bookish flavor.

(*f*) Find equivalent words or phrases in standard English for ten of the unexplained colloquialisms given on page 425.

(*g*) Underline the words in the first five pages of this chapter that you are not accustomed to using or hearing in everyday conversation.

II. Technical English

What technical terms are. Possibly the most obvious difference between colloquial and technical English lies in the fact that the latter is so often unintelligible to the layman. One might have considerable general information and be master of an extensive vocabulary and yet not be able to understand this passage:

> The *omo-hyoid* is a small muscle, long and slender, with a very remarkable course. It arises from the upper border of the *scapula* (behind the *coracoid* notch), and is directed at first horizontally forward and inward along the posterior border of the *clavicle;* at the center of this bone it turns on itself and is directed upward beneath the *sterno-mastoid* to be inserted into the lateral part of the lower border of the *hyoid* bone.[1]

The italicized words are technical terms used only in the science of anatomy. Now every specialized form of occupation, every art, science, branch of sport, or recognized hobby, has its own technical terms, which name its own special objects and processes.

Technical words and the standard vocabulary. Technical words as a class lie outside the vocabularies of colloquial and standard English, being confined in their use ordinarily to the groups having the special knowledge needed to interpret them. But here, again, there is a marked overlapping such as we observed in the case of words common to informal speech and formal discourse. When an object or a process for which a technical term stands becomes familiar to people in general, the word itself becomes familiar, too, and takes its place in ordinary English. In this way the language has been greatly enriched. The technical language of theology, for example, has given to

[1] M. Duval, *Artistic Anatomy*, p. 272. Italics not in the original.

English the following common words, among many others: *verse, school, salvation, damnation, convert, penitent, repent, reprobate, confess, skeptic, doctrine, grace, mercy,* and *pity.*[1] In the last few years everyday spoken English has taken over from the fields of invention, *carburetor, spark-plug, chassis, tonneau, wheel-base, radio, receiving set, aërial, broadcasting station,* and so on. Some technical words are used figuratively, and come, in time, to lose all of their technical significance for the majority of the people who use them. To most of us the common phrase "taken aback" may mean only "to be greatly surprised." It is, however, a technical expression in seamanship for the predicament in which a ship is put when the square sails are blown back against the masts by a head wind. When we speak of a "harrowing experience" we are seldom conscious of the harrow a farmer uses to break up clods of earth. These words and scores of others have ceased to be technical terms for the average speaker, and have been fully incorporated in the language.

Discrimination in using technical terms. Technical terms are immensely useful. They are the simplest and briefest means of speaking about things that have no names in ordinary speech. If one tries to express in words not technical the ideas contained in such statements as "We played twelve innings," "My rifle is a .405," or "The first-mortgage bonds were selling at 97," he will appreciate the brevity and precision of the technical term. It is worth while, then, for a writer to consider the extent to which he may use technical terms when addressing persons not specialists in his subject. His common sense tells him that if he uses highly technical language he will not be understood. It also tells him that if he uses a hundred

[1]This list of words is taken from Greenough and Kittredge's *Words and Their Ways in English Speech*, chap. v.

words when a single technical term would serve, he will be voted a bore. Plainly, he must try to find the golden mean.

There are degrees of technicality in any technical vocabulary. As we have seen, there are technical terms in such constant popular use that they hardly seem technical at all. Then there are terms familiar to the beginner or the moderately expert—frequently intelligible to those who are but mildly interested. And finally there are the terms that have clear meaning only for experts. From this point of view let us consider some of the words used in seamanship. In the first class we find nautical terms such as *derelict*, *rudder*, *bow*, *deck*, *keel*, *buoy*, *anchor*, and *mast;* these would be understood by any ordinarily informed landsman, and could hardly be called technical. The next group consists of words that would not be so widely understood, but which would be familiar to many people besides seamen. Anyone who goes sailing, or reads sea stories, or has any interest in boats, would be apt to know the meaning of *boom*, *gaff*, *sheet*, *halyards*, *capstan*, *sloop*, *schooner*, *yards*, *galley*, *to come about*, *luff up*, *reef*, and so forth. A discreet use of terms of this kind would hardly bewilder an ordinary reader. The next group consists of what Sam Weller would call "out ân' outers." Such highly technical words as *buntlines*, *vangs*, *bilge strakes*, *carlings*, *futtocks*, *knight-heads*, and *spanker* lie quite outside standard English. If we use them with a desire to be generally understood we must define or otherwise explain them.

Technical terms for "local color." There are occasions when we may use highly technical terms without regard to whether the reader will understand them or not. It is not essential that a reader of Kipling's *McAndrew's Hymn* shall know the meaning of *coupler-flange*, *spindle-guide*,

crosshead-gibs, *follower-bolts*, *link-head*, *tail-rods*, and the other terms that the old Scotch engineer uses. These words may give no definite ideas about the construction of McAndrew's engine, but they do help to give the flavor of reality to McAndrew's soliloquy, which is what counts in this instance.

In reading the following account of the loss of a sailor, taken from Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast*, it is not necessary that we should know the exact meaning of such technical terms as *hove flat aback*, *studding-sails*, *ringtail halyards*, and *futtock shrouds*. We understand that the unfortunate sailor fell into the water from the ship's rigging, that he was loaded down with gear, and had no chance for his life. The unfamiliar words add to the realism of the narrative rather than to our understanding of it.

At seven o'clock in the morning, it being our watch below, we were aroused from a sound sleep by the cry of "All hands ahoy! a man overboard!" This unwonted cry sent a thrill through the heart of everyone, and, hurrying on deck, we found the vessel hove flat aback, with all her studding-sails set. The watch were lowering away the quarter-boat, and I got on deck just in time to fling myself into her as she was leaving the side; but it was not until out upon the wide Pacific, in our little boat, that I knew whom we had lost. It was George Ballmer, the young English sailor, whom I have before spoken of as the life of the crew. He was going aloft to fit a strap round the maintopmast-head, for ringtail halyards, and had the strap and block, a coil of halyards, and a marline-spike about his neck. He fell from the starboard futtock shrouds, and, not knowing how to swim, and being heavily dressed, with all those things round his neck, he probably sank immediately. We pulled astern, in the direction in which he fell, and though we knew that there was no hope of saving him, yet no one wished to speak of returning, and we rowed about for nearly an hour, without an idea of doing anything, but unwilling to acknowledge to ourselves that we must give him up. At length we turned the boat's head and made toward the brig.

EXERCISES

1. How may a technical term make its way into colloquial and literary use? Give an example.

2. Mention five technical terms that would be widely understood; five that would not.

3. Group some of the technical words belonging to a game, art, craft, occupation, or science in which you are interested, as the nautical words on page 432 are grouped.

4. Comment on the use of the italicized technical terms in the following passages:

(*a*) Let us settle ourselves, and work and wedge our feet downward through the mud and slush of opinion, and prejudice, and tradition, and delusion, and appearance, that *alluvion* which covers the globe, through Paris and London, through New York and Boston, through Church and State, through poetry and philosophy and religion, till we come to a hard bottom and *rocks in place*, which we can call reality, and say, This is, and no mistake.

(*b*) Few phenomena gave me more delight than to observe the forms which thawing sand and clay assume in flowing down the sides of a deep cut on the railroad through which I passed on my way to the village, a phenomenon not very common on so large a scale, though the number of freshly exposed banks of the right material must have been greatly multiplied since railroads were invented. The material was sand of every degree of fineness and of various rich colors, commonly mixed with a little clay. When the frost comes out in the spring, and even in a thawing day in winter, the sand begins to flow down the slopes like lava, sometimes bursting out through the snow and overflowing it where no sand was to be seen before. Innumerable little streams overlap and interlace one with another, exhibiting a sort of hybrid product, which obeys half way the way of currents, and half way that of vegetation. As it flows, it takes the forms of sappy leaves or vines, making heaps of pulpy sprays a foot or more in depth, and resembling, as you look down on them, the *laciniated*, *lobed*, and *imbricated thalluses* of some lichens.

(*c*) The captain was expatiating in a low, conversational tone to the chief *mate* upon the danger of these *derelicts*, and upon his dread of coming upon them at night, when suddenly a man forward screamed out, "There's people on board of her, sir! I see them!" in a most extraordinary voice—a voice never heard before in our ship; the voice of a stranger. It gave the signal for a sudden tumult of shouts. The *watch below* ran up the *forecastle head* in a body, the cook dashed out of the *galley*. Everybody saw the poor fellows now. They were there! And all at once our ship, which had the well-earned name of being without a rival for speed in light winds, seemed to us to have lost the power of motion, as if the sea, becoming viscous, had clung to her sides. And yet she moved. Immensity, the inseparable companion of a ship's life, chose that day to breathe upon her as gently as a sleeping child. The clamor of our excitement had died out, and our living ship, famous for never losing *steerage way* as long as there was air enough to float a feather, stole, without a ripple, silent and white as a ghost, toward her wounded and mutilated sister, come upon at the point of death in the sunlit haze of a calm day at sea.

With the *binoculars* glued to his eyes, the captain said in a quavering tone: "They are waving to us with something *aft* there." He put down the glasses on the skylight brusquely, and began to walk about . . .

III. Development of the English Vocabulary

Introductory. In the rest of this chapter and in the chapter that follows we shall devote our attention to standard English. In this section we shall consider some of the more important ways in which English has grown in the past and is growing in the present. Our aim in doing this is not to get a smattering of facts belonging to the history of the language, but to gain a more vivid realization than we otherwise might have of the fact that English is a "living speech"—changing, growing. A knowledge of this fact, together with an understanding of the part that custom

plays in stabilizing the language (which will be discussed in the following section), will help us to deal more intelligently with many of the problems in diction that arise when we try to write appropriately and well.

Constant change. The vocabulary of English is in a constant state of flux. Old words are dropping out of use, or acquiring new meanings, or changing their forms. New words are being compounded out of old words, or borrowed from other languages, or invented. As with the cells of a living body, which are continually being worn out and built up, so with the vocabulary of a living language. Varied, and sometimes complex, processes are always going forward to produce changes in it. We can here examine only the more important of these processes, and these only in cursory fashion.

Borrowings. *Extent.* In English today there are more words of foreign origin than of native. Words have been taken over from every language with which English-speaking men have come in contact. Yet, owing to the remarkable assimilative power of English, the language is very far from being a hybrid. The very diversity in the elements of its vocabulary makes for ready assimilation. It possesses an enormous stock of French and Latin words, but it is not at all a mere echo of French or Latin.

Celtic and Danish. The Anglo-Saxons began adding to their language by borrowing Celtic words from the vanquished Britons. Among these borrowings are words like *down* (=hill), *dun* (a color), and *slough*, but the majority are proper names of rivers, mountains, and places. Later on, when the Danes in the last part of the eighth century began to harry the English coasts, finally bringing all England under their sway, the English showed their versatility by borrowing from their conquerors. Such everyday

words as *bask, by-law, call, crave, cast, die, happy, ill, low, meek, odd, sky, skin, skill, scare, scrape, wrong,* and *ugly* came from the Danes.

Latin. The most extensive single foreign element in English is Latin. The Britons, who had been under Roman influence for many years before the coming of the Anglo-Saxons, had adopted a considerable number of Latin words, and several of these were soon taken over by the English. The Latin *castra* (=camp), for example, became thoroughly incorporated in English speech: in the eastern and northern parts of England it became *caster,* and is found in such names as Lancaster and Doncaster; in the central portions it became *cester,* as in Leicester and Worcester; in the south and west, *chester,* as in Chester and Dorchester. Latin *portus* (English *port*) is another of these words that have become thoroughly at home in England. With the conversion of the English to Christianity in the sixth century came many new words. Naturally a good number of these were ecclesiastical, such as *apostle, bishop, pope, alms, creed, monk, nun,* and so on. It has been estimated that by the time of the Norman Conquest the English had adopted over six hundred Latin words. Since the seventh *century* the *absorption* of *Latin* has *proceeded apace* (the words in italics are from Latin, *proceed* and *apace* coming by way of Old French). In the Middle Ages all educated men could speak and write Latin, and for many centuries it was the language of intercourse among scholars. Even as late as 1623 Francis Bacon was anxious to have his English writings "well translated into Latin," and thirty years later John Milton, as Latin secretary to Cromwell, was eloquently defending English democracy in his *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano.* It is easy to see that while Latin held such a position among educated men, Latin words would be adopted freely whenever the need for them was felt or

imagined; and thus a large stock of important words was added to our vocabulary. In the sixteenth century, especially, a great number were taken over, writers setting out consciously and deliberately to borrow with the idea of enriching English. Our present tendency is to resort to Latin for scientific terms; recent examples are *radium*, *insulate*, and *insulation*. It is practically impossible to say much about law, science, theology, philosophy, or mechanics, or to discuss any matter in an abstract or generalizing way, without using words of Latin origin.

French. From the French, English has drawn freely. Most of these acquisitions are ultimately derived from Latin, for French itself is a Latinic, or Romance, language. The borrowings became most numerous in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries when Englishmen were ardent in the pursuit of French customs, fashions, and ideas. Many common words, *age, air, boil, chair, cry, engine, face, flower, jolly, river, soil, table, voyage,* etc., were early borrowings. Something of the history of the development of a polite civilization in England during the later Middle Ages and the Renaissance may be conjectured from groups like the following: *amiable, beauty, benign, chivalry, courage, courtliness, dainty, favor, gentle, grace, honor, manner, pleasant, piteous, reverence,* and *virtue; baron, duchess, duke, madam, majesty, master,* and *sir; country, crown, nation, prince, royal,* and *state; boot, cap, cloak, coat,* and *gown; broil, dine, dinner, feast, fork, napkin,* and *roast.* French came again into *vogue* with the Restoration, and English was lightened by *caprice, caress, coquette, dessert, grotesque,* etc. Recent importations of words descriptive of *society* and *fashion* will at once suggest themselves. On the sterner side we should not forget that *duty, valor, captain, colonel, sergeant, siege, battle,* came from France. In the field of mechanics

aëronaut, caisson, chauffeur, garage, hangar, etc., are new arrivals.

Other elements. Only passing mention may be made here of some of the other foreign elements in English. Since the sixteenth century, Greek has furnished many important words, a considerable number of which have been brought into use by scientists and inventors. Among these are *anthracite, arsenic, calomel, chemist, iodine, photograph, telegraph,* and *zoölogy.* It is a favorite device of scientists and inventors to make new terms by coining them from one or more Greek words; thus *helio,* from the Greek word meaning "sun," has been used to produce over fifty. Among everyday words are *apathy, aster, athlete, atlas, biography, catholic, caustic, crisis, dialogue, elastic, monotonous, myth, panic,* and *skeleton.* From the Dutch have come nautical and commercial terms like *ahoy, avast, boom, deck, dock, hull, lash, lighter, marline, moor, reef, skipper, sloop, smack, swab, yacht, yawl; groat, guilder, hogshead, jerkin, spool, wagon.* Characteristic words from Italian are *archipelago, balcony, balloon, ballot, cameo, casino, dilettante, extravaganza, fiasco, fresco, gondola, libretto, opera, piano, punctilio,* and *studio.* From Spanish come *ambuscade, bravado, canyon, cargo, caste, cockroach, cocoa, desperado, flotilla, grandee, hammock, junta, maize, mosquito, mulatto, peccadillo, ranch, renegade, siesta, silo, vanilla.* Among the few words that modern German has contributed are *barouche, bismuth, carouse, cobalt, kindergarten, meerschaum, poodle, pretzel, sauerkraut, stein, swindle, waltz, wheedle,* and *zinc.*

Imitation. Imitation of sound accounts for many words like *boom, buzz, fizz, pop, simmer, smack,* and *whiz.* A long list of words derived from animal sounds might be compiled—*bobolink, chickadee, katydid, cuckoo, hiss,* for example. Words of this sort are often coined, as was Uncle Remus's

kerplunk, but only a comparatively few survive and win a place in the language.

Proper names. Words derived from proper names form an important group. A man's name may be turned into a common noun or a verb, as *watt,* from James Watt, a Scotch engineer and inventor; *volt,* from Volta, an Italian physicist who invented the voltaic battery; *boycott,* from Captain Boycott, an Irish landlord; and *bowdlerize,* from Bowdler, who expurgated Shakespeare. The name of a town may be used in the same way; thus *calico* is derived from Calicut, and *cambric* from Cambray. *Pasteurize,* from Louis Pasteur, is a recent derivation. Newer still are *dreadnaught,* which comes from the name of a British battleship; "*Marconigram,*" from Marconi, the inventor of the "wireless"; "Zeppelin," from Count Zeppelin.

Composition. New words are formed by compounding, or joining together two or more elements already existing in the language. The most striking kind of "composition" is the result of bringing together whole words: thus Bowie (a man's name)+knife=bowie-knife; brick+bat=brick-bat; bryd (Old English for *bride*)+guma (Old English for *man*)=brydguma, which in Modern English is *bridegroom;* rail+road=railroad. Some recent compounds are *motor-car, rapid-fire gun, machine-gun, power-boat, torpedo-boat, motorman, trolley-car, motor-'bus, power-house, safety-match, battle-plane, sea-plane,* and *self-starter.* Prefixes and suffixes, verbal elements that now have no separate existence as words but live only in combination with independent words, are a source of many additions to the vocabulary. By means of prefixes and suffixes we obtain from *friend,* for example, such words as *befriend, friendship, friendly,* and *friendliness;* from *hope,* such words as *hopeful, hopefully, hopefulness;* from *affirm,* such words as *reaffirm, affirmable,*

affirmatory; from *satire,* such words as *satiric, satirical, satirically, satirist, satirize.*

Change of function. Lack of inflection makes it easy for one part of speech to do duty as another without any change of form in the word. Nouns become verbs merely by being used as verbs: we *iron* a shirt, *paper* a house, *water* a horse, *blackball* a man, *bridge* or *ford* a river, *carpet* a room, *comb* our hair, and so on. Verbs become nouns, though not so freely: we buy a *dress,* take a *walk* or a *drive,* make a *hobble* for a horse, put a *hitch* in a rope. Adjectives become nouns: the *private* saluted the *general,* dancing on the *green,* Boston *Common.* The word *light* may be used as a noun, adjective, verb, or adverb, and so may several other words. *Bound* is a noun, adjective, or verb. Further examples will readily suggest themselves.

Metaphor. Words alter or extend their meanings by being used metaphorically. Some matter-of-fact persons might be surprised to learn how poetically they talk, for many of our commonest expressions are metaphorical in origin. We are conscious of the figurative use in

> I am now on a burning question: the labor traffic; and I shall ask permission in this place only to touch it with the tongs.[1]

We are not likely to be aware of it in such an everyday word as *chest,* meaning a part of the body; yet this is figuratively derived from the literal meaning "box." The metaphor in *sullen,* as we now use the word, is lost to most of us; only scholars know that *sullen* once meant "solitary." So with *tangle,* which comes from a word that meant "seaweed"; to call twisted ropes or yarns "seaweed" is strikingly figurative. We are still conscious of the metaphor when

[1]Stevenson, *A Footnote to History.*

we speak of a man's affairs as being "tangled," though we do not realize the part "seaweed" plays in it. *Canter* is prosaic enough, yet it is a shortened form of Canterbury and once meant the gentle gallop of mounted pilgrims to the shrine at Canterbury. *Bluff* was originally a nautical word descriptive of the blunt bow of a vessel which breasted the seas instead of cutting through them; then it was applied figuratively to a stretch of coast; later on, to men and their manners. Note the metaphors in *breasted* and *stretch*. Perhaps the most obvious examples are found in the figurative use of words that name parts of the body: the *head* of a nail, or pin, or tack, or of a business, etc.; the *arm* of a chair, or lever, an *arm* of the sea; the *neck* of a bottle; the *teeth* of a saw, in the *teeth* of a gale; the *shoulder* of a mountain; the *foot* of a ladder; the *eye* of a hook, or needle; the *mouth* of a river; the *tail* of the eye, the *tail* of a cart, or procession; the *tongue* of a wagon; the *lip* of a cup.

Summary. We have observed some of the more important ways in which the English vocabulary has developed and expanded: through borrowings from other languages, through imitation of sounds, through derivation from proper names, through combinations of words, through extension of meaning by change of grammatical function and by figurative use. In such ways and in other ways not mentioned in our brief survey, the vocabulary has grown until it now numbers well over 400,000 words. It is still growing; and will continue to grow as long as those who use it go on finding new ways of doing things and gaining new knowledge.

EXERCISES

1. Name the chief sources of English word-borrowings.
2. Add a word to each of the groups given on pages 436-442.

3. From what languages are the following words derived? How many can you place correctly before consulting a dictionary?

abstract
acme
alarm
alcohol
algebra
alpaca
anarchy
apricot
artichoke
asphalt
bard
boomerang
brigand
cairn
camera
canoe
caribou
cherub
civil
coffee
corporation
cotton
damask
decadent
diameter
dinghy
eccentric
elixir
etch
euphony
finance
flagrant
florist
folly
force
frippery
gallant
gallery
garrulous
germ
gland
grudge
guide
habit
harness
hash
helium
hermit
heterodox
histology
hominy
hotel
hurricane
hydrostatic
idea
imitate
immortal
inane
indigo
isometric
jacket
jelly
join
jungle
jute
ketchup
kinetic
kink
kotow
lagoon
landscape
launch
lemon
loot
macaroni
malaria
microscope
monsoon
nominate
paragraph
philosophy
piazza
pneumatic
polo
raccoon
range
rasp
reason
russet
season
serious
shawl
shibboleth
snaffle
submarine
sugar
sympathy
taboo
tally
tank
tea
tent
thermometer
thug
tobacco
toddy
umbrella
vendetta
veneer
waffle
walrus
yodel

4. What are the chief ways, other than borrowing, in which the English vocabulary is being enlarged?

5. Make a list of all the imitative words you can think of. Verify your judgment by consulting the derivations given in a dictionary.

6. Mention two or three words derived from proper names in addition to those given in the text.

7. Mention two or three recent compounds in addition to those given in the text.

8. Make a list of the principal compounds in which the following words appear: *dog, good, horse, high, ice.*

9. Give two or three examples of change of function in addition to those given in the text.

10. What parts of speech are the following words?—*arch, back, catch, dog, ever, faint, ground, heel, joint, level.*

11. Find in your reading an instance of change of function through metaphor.

12. On the basis of your own observation, what occupations and activities should you say had added the largest number of new words to the language during the past ten or fifteen years?

IV. Freedom and Restraint in Diction

Enlarging or altering the vocabulary. We are now ready to consider the content of the standard vocabulary and the ways in which we may determine our choice of words. And first, let us understand clearly that the processes of growth or change indicated in the preceding section are still actively at work in the language. Conformity on the part of the majority of writers to well-established customs in the use of words tends to restrain the operation of these processes, but it by no means checks them entirely. If it did, standard English would become a "dead" language. What restraints custom imposes we shall consider farther

on in this section; for the moment, let us look only at a writer's freedom in the use of words.

Borrowings. He may borrow foreign words to his heart's content. Chapters X and XIII of Professor Boas's *Shakespeare and His Predecessors* give us an illustration of freedom in this particular; in these chapters (selected at random) occur borrowings from French, German, Italian, and Latin as follows:[1]

Wanderjahre	jus strictum
reductio ad absurdum	bourgeoise
précis	Venus genetrix
argumentum ad hominem	beaux yeux
aequitas	roué
ancien régime	Novelle
bonhommie	a priori
magni nominis umbra	la haute finance
comme il faut	jus strictissimum
propter vitam vivendi	grande dame
Lehrjahre	perdere causas
epithalamium	trouvère
ghetto	a fortiori
dénouement	Summum Jus Summa Injuria

Imitations. If a writer wishes to describe a sound and finds that a coined word fits the sound better than any word in regular use, he is at liberty to fashion one. "At the first sign of danger it utters its half-plaintive, half-petulant *kill-dee, kill-dee* . . . " writes Frank M. Chapman in his *Handbook of Birds.* In another passage he writes of "a nasal *peent.*" In *An English Village* Richard Jeffries writes that "In winter the bare branches sing a shrill *sir-r-r.*" A few pages farther on he coins another word: "Move but a hand, and instantly they fall rather than dive into the water,

[1] A few words in this list, like *ghetto*, may be considered naturalized; but Boas treats them all as foreign terms, and accordingly they are here listed as such.

making a sound like *thock* as they strike it . . . " If such coinages are rather exceptional, the reason is not that they are taboo, but that the occasions for them are rare.

Derivations from proper names. The writer is likewise free to use words derived from proper names before these words are recorded in a dictionary. Carlyle exercised this freedom when he used *Millocracy* (deriving his word from J. S. Mill), *Joe-Manton Aristocracies, Puseyism,* and many other words of the sort. So did Emerson when he coined (?) *Jonathanization* (=Americanization) and *Birminghamize.* A more recent instance is *Shavian,* from Bernard Shaw.

Compounds. Freedom in respect to compounds is still a charter-right of the language. In Kipling's poems, for instance, we may find many compounds of his own cementing. Opening his *Collected Verse* at random, on page 86, we find these: *guardports, up-Channel, sea-crust, berg-edges, hide-stripped, heat-rotted,* and *grave-mound.* On page 87 occur *man-stifled, veldt-side, fern-scrub;* on page 88, *blue-lights;* on page 89, *shell-burred, wolf-pack;* on page 90, *silk-clad;* on page 91, *well-forged;* on page 92, *tide-race, loud-voiced, birth-stain;* on page 93, *Wattle-bloom, straight-flung;* on page 94, *gun-flecked, faithful-foolish-fond, mere-breathed.* Freedom in the use of prefixes and suffixes is illustrated by Emerson's *disindividualize, fromness,* and *otherest.*

Changes of function. The writer may change the grammatical functions of words if he wishes. From the noun *dilettante* Carlyle coins the verb *dilettante-ing.* The adjective *bottomless* he uses as a noun in "the black Bottomless of Terror." The noun *screech-owl* he uses as an adjective in "a too miserable screech-owl phantasm." But good writers are very sparing of indulgence in this liberty—possibly because innovations of the sort we are speaking of wear too close a resemblance to the grammatical blunders of the careless and ignorant.

Metaphor. Lastly, the writer may with the greatest freedom alter the meaning of words by figurative use. In fact, the only restraint put upon a writer in his use of metaphor is his own critical judgment as to the intelligibility and fitness of his figure. There follow a few illustrations from recent and contemporary writers:

1. Antipathies of the most *pungent* character . . .[1]

2. Olives and cypresses, pergolas and vines, terraces on the roofs of houses, soft, iridescent mountains, a warm yellow light—what more could the *difficult* tourist want?[2]

3. While this forbids him to discuss ultimate metaphysical theories of beauty, it is no bar to reflection upon the nature and function of art: and it was in this field that Pater *deployed* as an aesthetic philosopher.[3]

4. When a young pastor is in the *aspen* stage of attachment, and open to agitation at the merest trifles, a really substantial incongruity of this complexion is a disturbing thing.[4]

5. Kim thrilled to the *clean* pride of Departmental praise.[5]

6. Kim watched the stars as they rose one after another in the still, *sticky* dark.[5]

7. The lost one strode up to the light of the fire, and disappeared to the waist in a *wave* of joyous dogs.[6]

The restraining influence of custom. In view of what we have just seen in the preceding paragraphs, is it not obvious that the person who stigmatizes as "incorrect" all departures from established verbal form is setting himself against an ingrained tendency of our speech? But it is equally obvious that such novelties as have won a permanent place have had the backing of a majority of those who use good English. "Custom," wrote Ben Jonson, "is the most

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[1]William James, *Pragmatism.*
[2]Henry James, *A Little Tour in France.*
[3]Ferris Greenslet, *Walter Pater.*
[4]Thomas Hardy, *Wessex Tales.*
[5]Kipling, *Kim.*
[6]Kipling, *Life's Handicap.*

certain mistress of language." As long as we wish to enjoy the benefits of a common speech, so long will we conform, in the main, to well-established customs in our use of words. Let us see why this is so.

The social basis of linguistic conformity. Conformity to established usage—the usage of the best writers and speakers—has a sound social basis. A word may mean anything its users agree it shall mean; it has no inherent signification of its own apart from that agreed upon. The word *zeitgeist*, for instance, means nothing to us unless we happen to know that Germans are agreed it shall mean "spirit of the times." Accordingly, if a word is to be generally understood, there must be a general understanding as to what it signifies. On this point a well-known passage of Lewis Carroll's penetrating nonsense bears directly:

"There's glory for you!" said Humpty Dumpty.

"I don't know what you mean by *glory*," Alice said.

Humpty Dumpty smiled contemptuously. "Of course you don't—till I tell you. I meant 'there's a nice knockdown argument for you.' "

"But *glory* doesn't mean 'a nice knockdown argument,' " Alice objected.

"When I use a word," Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less."

"The question is," said Alice, "whether you *can* make words mean so many different things."

"The question is," said Humpty Dumpty, "which is to be master—that's all."

Alice was too much puzzled to say anything; so, after a minute, Humpty Dumpty began again. "They've a temper, some of them —particularly verbs; they're the proudest: adjectives you can do anything with, but not verbs. However, I can manage the whole lot of them! Impenetrability! That's what I say."

"Would you please tell me," said Alice, "what that means?"

"Now you talk like a reasonable child," said Humpty Dumpty,

looking very much pleased. "I meant by *impenetrability* that we've had enough of that subject, and it would be just as well if you'd mention what you mean to do next, as I suppose you don't mean to stop here all the rest of your life."

"That's a great deal to make one word mean," said Alice in a thoughtful tone.[1]

It is easy to imagine the confusion that would arise if large numbers of us were to adopt Humpty Dumpty's individualistic mode of speech.

The social forces that impel most of us to conform, as a rule, to good usage are intangible, yet powerful. Conformity to linguistic custom has a value somewhat akin to the value of the social virtues of consideration for others, self-control, and fairness. We should exaggerate its social importance if we put good use on a plane with keeping one's promise; but we should belittle it if we compared it, as some recent writers on usage have done, to following this or that fashion in the cut of a waistcoat. It really is much less important to us as individuals, and much less important to society in general, that we should be dressed in the latest fashion than that we should be able to speak and write correct and understandable English.

Liberty not license. An intelligent person ought to be able to realize that there is ample precedent for an occasional departure from established usage without sharing in what a writer in *The Nation* calls a "popular delusion that the only defense against . . . the commonplace is impropriety or affectation, or . . . that the first step toward a mastery of English is the repudiation of its vocabulary." To labor under such a delusion is to misunderstand completely the nature of the literary precedent illustrated earlier in this section. In order to realize that liberty is not license, let us look at literary precedent a little more closely.

[1] *Through the Looking-Glass.*

In good writing, departures from established use are few. In the first place, in the work of a good writer the proportion of what we may call individual usages, as distinguished from established usages, is very small. There are no figures available, but the truth of the statement just made may be verified by looking through any well-written book for instances of individual usage. Writers differ noticeably in the amount of linguistic freedom which they allow themselves; some tend to be familiar or colloquial and others tend to be formal and bookish. We find, for example, greater freedom in Carlyle and Browning than in Arnold and Tennyson. But the bulk of well-known books will show the student, if he searches, that instances of individual usage do not appear upon every page, nor even in every chapter—that sometimes he must seek far before he finds one of them.

Improprieties debarred. In the second place, justifiable departures from ordinary usage do not include, except for purposes of humor, improprieties—words misused because of mistaken ideas of their true meanings. Amusing enough are improprieties of the sort uttered by Mrs. Malaprop, in *The Rivals,* when she requests that "no delusions to the past" be made, invents the wonderful simile "as headstrong as an allegory on the banks of the Nile," and tells of something that would "precipitate one down the prejudice." But the mantle of humor does not cover the misuse of *infer* in the following quotation:

> In an article in the *Student Herald* of April 10, it was stated that the freshmen would probably have no banquet in the "accepted meaning of the term." Does this infer that the sophomore class has got to sit by and watch proceedings from the outside?

Such a use of the word is a blunder, pure and simple, and has nothing to recommend it.

Departures from established use justified by fitness. In the third place, and finally, the justification for any departure from established use is the fitness of the innovation. To purchase novelty at the price of lowering the tone of one's work, or of seeming affected or ignorant, is a poor bargain unless there is a compensating gain in expressiveness. For the writer who is not fairly expert in the use of words, there is seldom this compensation. He is more likely to blunder, when he departs from usage, than to triumph. As Dryden said: "If I find an elegant word in a classic author, I propose it to be naturalized, by using it myself: and, if the public approves of it, the bill passes. But every man cannot distinguish between pedantry and poetry: every man, therefore, is not fit to innovate." Every man has the right to innovate, but a due regard for the impression which he wishes to create will make him exercise his right with caution. And there is really very little occasion to go far outside the bounds of established usage; English is such a flexible instrument that it is capable of expressing, without much personal addition or modification, most of the things that an ordinary writer will have to say.

The balance between freedom and restraint. What, then, becomes of the freedom spoken of at the beginning of this section? Is it something given with one hand and withdrawn with the other? In a measure, yes—just as social freedom is. There is an analogy between linguistic and social freedom which is helpful if we do not push it too far. We prize our social liberty in America, believing that we enjoy a considerable degree of it. And yet it has restraints. The person who oversteps the line in one direction forfeits the society of ladies and gentlemen; the person who oversteps it in another direction is put in jail. The individual has a wide range of choice, but cannot

escape the consequences of his choosing. So, too, has the writer, nor can he escape the consequences. If he constantly misuses words, he is set down as ignorant; if he shows little sense of what is becoming and proper to formal writing, he is regarded as deficient in taste or intelligence. A knowledge of usage which will enable him to keep within the bounds of literary propriety—even within the strictest bounds, at times—is therefore valuable to every writer.

EXERCISES

1. Read ten or fifteen pages of Carlyle to find instances of individual usage. Make a list of all words and phrases that seem to you possible examples. Then look these up in the best unabridged dictionary available. Those which you cannot find in the dictionary or which are attributed only to Carlyle or are marked colloquial, provincial, slang, archaic, or obsolete, should be kept as examples. Report your results to the class, giving specific references.

2. To obtain some idea of good modern practice in regard to individual usage, let the class be divided into small groups, the students in each group to read the same portion of some reputable modern book assigned to them. As it is desirable to have this investigation cover as wide a range as possible, not more than one book by any one author should be included in the assignment. Students should carry out their investigation in the manner suggested in the preceding exercise, being careful to include in their reports only such words and phrases as the author uses in his own person, i.e., ignoring dialogue and quoted passages. Reports should state the kind of book examined.

3. Write a paragraph which states in your own words the reasons for following established customs in the use of words.

4. Give an example of a departure from established use which is justified by its fitness. State the reason for your opinion.

5. Find in a newspaper an example of a departure from established use which is not justified by its fitness. State the reason for your opinion.

Determining the Standing of a Word

Choosing a dictionary. How are we to know whether some particular word that occurs to us is, or is not, good English in the place in which we wish to use it? There are two ways of obtaining this knowledge: one, from a good dictionary; the other, from personal observation. An unabridged dictionary is the best to own because it gives the largest number of words and the fullest information. Three excellent unabridged dictionaries are published in the United States: the *Century*, the *Standard*, and *Webster's New International*. Should a student find the purchase of one of these dictionaries too expensive, he can get along very well for the time being with the *College Standard Dictionary* or with *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. In cases of especial difficulty or importance he can consult one of the larger dictionaries in the college library.[1]

Learning to use a dictionary. What is said here about learning to use a dictionary will be confined to the single point of finding out what a dictionary has to tell us about the standing of a word. If we examine a page or two of the definitions in our dictionary, we shall probably observe that some of the definitions are given without annotation or comment and that others are preceded or followed, as the case may be, by various signs and abbreviations. We shall probably observe, also, that a comment made upon one meaning of a word does not necessarily apply to other meanings. Of the six meanings, for example, given in the *College Standard Dictionary* for the noun "plant," the first three are recorded without annotation; the remaining three are marked *Rare*, *Slang*, and *Obsolete*, respectively. Now if

[1] In detailed information and richness of illustration the *New English Dictionary*, published in England, is without question the leading dictionary of English. It is far too expensive for most students to own, and is rather too detailed for ordinary rapid consultation; but it should be known by every serious student of words.

the meaning of a word is given without any such comment as the preceding, we may assume that the makers of the dictionary regarded the word as standard English, permissible in formal speech or writing. But if the definition is accompanied by one of the conventional signs or abbreviations commonly used, it is evident that the makers of the dictionary regarded the word as in some degree unsuitable or inappropriate to formal composition. In learning to use the dictionary, then, to find out the standing of words, we should train ourselves to note whether a given definition is, or is not, annotated; and we should learn the meanings of the various signs and abbreviations used. The significance of these annotations we shall consider briefly in the following paragraph.

What the dictionary tells us. We are in doubt, perhaps, about the standing of the familiar word *taxi*. On looking it up we find it designated as *Colloquial*. This means, as we know, better suited to conversation than to formal writing. *Taxicab* we learn incidentally is standard English. On the campus we hear *dopey* used frequently. Would it be appropriate to use in a dignified business letter? Our dictionary records it as "slang," which signifies that the word is to be avoided in ordinary writing, avoided even in conversation except of the most intimate or careless sort. An instructor has underlined the word "reckon," used in one of our papers in the sense of "suppose" or "guess." Our dictionary annotates this use of the word as "provincial," which signifies that it is looked upon as rustic or uncultivated. Perhaps we have been reading Burns and have taken a fancy to the word *unco*. The dictionary designates it as "dialectal." Therefore, unless we are intentionally writing in dialect, we should be cautious in using the word. As we go on looking up words we sooner or later find a word marked "obsolete." Such a word has dropped

completely out of use in current speech and writing; we have no right to expect that the average reader will understand what it means. Or perhaps the word we are looking up has not entirely disappeared from present-day use, yet is felt to be too antiquated for ordinary prose. In that case it will be marked "archaic" or "obsolescent." Some of the words that we have come to understand through our reading of English poetry—*even* in the sense of "evening," for example —are marked in the dictionary as "poetical." A word so designated would probably seem affected or humorous in plain prose. A considerable number of the words that we have become acquainted with through our pastimes, studies, and other pursuits will be annotated by some such term as *golf*, *chess*, *medicine*, *astronomy*, *chemistry*, *zoölogy*, *law*, *mechanics*, *military science*, or *fine arts*. Words so annotated are to be understood as technical. Beyond stating that fact the dictionary does not attempt to go; in using such words, for instance, as *rhizomorph* and *socman* we must decide for ourselves whether or not they are sufficiently well known to require no explanation.

Personal observation. From the foregoing it is evident that we can learn much about the standing of words from a dictionary. Its makers are well informed and careful in matters of usage. If we pay heed to their cautions and warnings, we shall not go far astray through using words that are not appropriate to formal composition. But the distinctions in usage given in the dictionary are broad and are not always a full substitute for those finer distinctions made by persons who have a thorough first-hand acquaintance with words as they are used by cultivated speakers and skillful writers. One whose knowledge of the standing of words was wholly dependent on the dictionary might be betrayed into using in what was intended to be a plain and simple prose style *hospitium* for *inn*,

ne'er for *never*, *'neath* for *beneath*, *neatherd* for *cowboy*, *peradventure* for *perhaps*, *spouse* for *husband* or *wife*. Before we can use *hospitium* and *peradventure* with real appropriateness we must know something more about them than that they are standard English words and mean *inn* and *perhaps*. That is to say, an indolent and slavish reliance upon the dictionary should not be allowed to take the place of an active and intelligent interest in words as they appear in their native haunts.

The dictionary aids us most, perhaps, during the years when our knowledge of words is only beginning to accumulate. As we gain in experience, and our knowledge grows more varied and complete, we shall find ourselves relying less and less upon the dictionary in matters of usage and more and more upon our own judgment. And we shall be able, also, to make a more discriminating use of the information given by the dictionary than we could do had we no rich background of personal experience with words.

We shall progress most rapidly in our ability to determine the standing of words through personal observation if we train ourselves to ask and answer certain questions about speakers and writers and about the words that attract our attention while we are listening or reading. (1) Who is the speaker or writer? Does he handle words effectively? How much faith may we put in his knowledge and judgment concerning matters of usage? (2) What is the tone of the passage in which the word is used?—plain and businesslike? lofty or eloquent? pompous and pretentious? half-serious, half-playful? dignified? free-and-easy? humorous? (3) Does the word seem to be in keeping with the general tone of its context? Does it chime in with its neighbors, or does it produce a discord? When we have met with a word several times and have answered such questions about its use, we feel personally acquainted with

it and with the company it keeps, and may ourselves use it appropriately.

The student may interpret the counsel just given as an injunction to be artificially conscious of words as he reads or listens—to observe manner to the exclusion of matter. Against such a course he instinctively and rightly rebels. The questions suggested normally come up only for subconscious decision: when we start a fable in slang by George Ade, or a humorous passage from Ring Lardner, we recognize at once that here is no judge to decide doubtful cases; when we read the first line of Mrs. Gerould's latest essay, we are aware immediately that we are in the middle field of diction occupied by the alert, progressive, and dignified writer of the moment; when we plunge into an essay by Shaw, that we are encountering a man whose work may live long and may, in a sense, help to make the language of the future; when we begin an essay of Lowell's, that we are in the company of a writer who helped to create the formal literary diction of his own day. These general levels we recognize without effort—once we have made ourselves aware of the problem of diction and of its vitality. Specific cases of individual words will then suggest themselves without making us too conscious of them. When this happens, the battle is won. We are aware of manner without neglecting matter.

EXERCISES

(*a*) Find out all you can from the best available dictionaries about the italicized words in the following sentences.

1. There are *folks* in this county who have never seen an automobile.
2. He jumped *onto* the platform.
3. I would not *demean* myself by talking to such a person.
4. Jones wore a white linen *vest*.

5. The canoe floated *sideways.*
6. His guilt was far from being *proven.*
7. His *forbears* were Scotch and English.
8. He can *fix* the pump so that it will work.
9. What *transpired* at the meeting last night?
10. She has a *job* as *saleslady* at Hagen's.

(*b*) Determine the standing of the italicized words as used in the following sentences:

1. The models, of course, would have to be changed frequently, as, by fashion's fast *evoluting,* the crime of today becomes the style of tomorrow.
2. Failed banker *suicided* yesterday.
3. The residence of O. C. Rogers, 247 Lake Street, was *burglarized* early last evening . . .
4. I have said somewhere that the three *Presidentiads* preceding 1861 showed that the weakness and wickedness of rulers is as liable to be manifested here in America under republican influences, as in Europe under dynastic.
5. There is not the slightest reason for accepting the wild tales to the effect that England has executed a *volte-face* of her traditional policy.
6. "I will slay him," said Gawaine, "with a sword that was sent me that was *passing trenchant.*"
7. The age at which scientific explanations of linguistic facts should be given is a question for *educationers.*
8. A point is reached, however, in the epistemological history when the presentational aspect of the world no longer proves satisfactory. The knowing subject begins to have an *awning* that some parts of its vision are not final, that they are there because of something else that is now present, and the everlasting What and Why are born.
9. Now, parody, as such, is absolutely natural to man, and it had been frequent in the Middle Ages, though, usually, in a somewhat rough and *horseplayful* form.
10. The surest way to get rid of unfair discriminations in freight rates would be to *Morganize* the railroads.
11. Elizabeth had latterly been accustomed of an afternoon to present a cup of cider or ale and bread-and-cheese to Nance Mockridge, who worked in the yard, *wimbling* hay bonds.

12. These mild, milk-and-water landscapes never *enthuse* me as does the prairie.

13. They tell me that even in the provinces evening clothes are now quite the *kibosh* for the theater.

14. This trip from Portland, Maine, to San Francisco has demonstrated that he is the world's leading exponent of the *walkist's* art.

15. The Peninsular and Oriental liner "Arabia" has been *submarined.*

16. Poor people fare coarsely, work hard, go *woolward* and bare.

17. Other champions have arisen, but he still holds his place as the best all-around *tenniser* the United States has ever produced.

18. The doorman's *phiz* was the queerest of all in that queer company.

19. Within three months of their introduction there were five hundred *jitneys* being used in Providence.

20. I heartily recommend it as a thoroughly *informational* book.

21. There is only one way for the young writer to make a popular success in literature today, and that is to put *punch* into everything he writes.

22. Add a hundred for the cost of the last trip—Gad, won't Torp stare to see me!—a hundred and thirty-two leaves seventy-eight for *baksheesh*—I shall need it—and to play with.

23. Every year the great barracks-like building is crowded to the attic with the same swarm of drones stupidly *vacationing* month after month.

24. The wheels of social life cannot run smoothly if gentlemen with unusually loud voices will persist in being *opposive* at the dinner-table.

25. As soon as he realized that he was *de trop,* he *vamoosed.*

26. You can now *subway* from the Bronx to Flatbush.

27. It was a long, low apartment, *bookcased* to the ceiling in fumed oak.

28. Pot-hunters have other methods of shooting the Adirondack deer, such as *yarding* and establishing salt licks.

29. As a candidate for governor he would have the *heartsome* indorsement of every good citizen in this city.

30. Don't you think that Pomeranians are *cute* little dogs?

31. From Moseby's Corners to Red Wing is just about three *hoots* and a *holler*.

32. There's no use in your *worritin'* over that alpaca, Sabina.

33. The iron molders threaten a *walk-out* that will *tie up* the entire plant.

34. He has had that *fid* on the back of his head ever since he was a baby.

35. He ground the bearings until the tractor ran as *suent* as a sewing-machine.

36. There is more profit in reading biography and history than in reading *fictionary* books even of the better kind.

37. "Old Man Blunt" is a *scream*, and easily the brightest *storiette* of the series.

38. Shall the respectable citizen thus gravely teach, by precept and example, the necessity of the young man's providing a certain number of superfluous *glow-shoes*, and umbrellas, and empty guest chambers for empty guests, before he dies?

39. He may have his ideas on the comparative efficiency of a Florida hotel staff brought up in a body for Northern summer duty and a genial aggregation of college *pick-ups* out for a vacation lark and their expenses.

40. *Gents* all, if I've got to *kick the bucket* anyhow, it might as well be here as in Waco. And I'll be obleeged if you'll *cut out* flowers and lace-trimmed *weepers* at the funeral.

(*c*) From the glossary or notes of a school edition of one of Shakespeare's plays make a list of ten words that are obsolete or radically changed in meaning.

CHAPTER IX

USING WORDS EFFECTIVELY

Introductory. In the preceding chapter we learned something about three of the most important strata in our language and how to distinguish them. As a result of that study we should be able to choose intelligently the verbal level on which at any given moment we wish to move; and should be aware, when we use a word outside the standard vocabulary, of what we are doing and why we are doing it. The main purpose of our study was to help us choose words appropriate to a given occasion—especially an occasion when the diction best fitted for our use would be standard English. In the present chapter we shall consider our choice of words from the point of view of effectiveness. Assuming that we can select words of the right standing, how can we use them to the best advantage?—make them convey our meaning clearly; and use them so that they are not flat and tedious, but fresh, crisp, and suggestive?

I. Precision

The need of precision. Precision in the use of words is one of the most important elements of a good style. Words used inexactly can convey only a vague and shadowy meaning at the best; at the worst, they may convey no meaning at all, or a meaning opposite to that intended. Lack of precision will defeat the ends for which all ordinary writing or speaking is undertaken—the communication of facts and ideas. Hence the value of choosing those words which most accurately represent the facts or ideas to be communicated.

Degrees of precision. There are degrees of precision. If we say "He entered the room," we have stated the fact in a very general way. He may have come in on all fours or in a wheel-chair, as far as the word *entered* is concerned. If we say "He walked into the room," we have added to the general fact its mode of accomplishment. But there are various ways of walking, and if we wish our readers to visualize a particular way, we should be more definite and use some word like *stride, glide, toddle, totter, shuffle, saunter, stalk, strut, limp, burst, bustle,* or *slip.* In the following example, *enter, walked,* and *scuffed* illustrate degrees of precision appropriately used:

How did the burglar enter the house? Why, the door was open, so he just walked in. And, to judge from the nail-scratches on the hardwood floors, he scuffed along regardless of the noise he made.

At one end of the scale are words of the largest content of meaning, such as *enter,* known as "generic" words; at the other end, words of the smallest, such as *trudge,* known as "specific" words. The latter, "words that reek of things," are usually the more vigorous; the skillful writer will use them whenever he can. As they express finer shades of meaning, they are likely to need greater care in their application. It is easier to distinguish between *walk* and *run* than between *tramp* and *trudge,* or *stalk* and *strut.* But generic words are not to be dispensed with. We could not profitably substitute very specific words for *enter* and *follow* in such a statement as.

If you enter the Park at the West Gate and follow the left-hand drive for half a mile, you will find yourself at the main entrance to the Botanical Gardens.

The statement is properly general in not specifying the manner in which one enters the park or follows the left-hand drive; for the manner—whether one walks rapidly or slowly, rides a bicycle or a horse, or is carried in a sedan-chair—is quite unimportant as far as the directions are concerned. The rule for practical guidance is to use the most specific word consonant with the idea to be expressed.

Typical instances of lack of precision. We shall probably have a keener appreciation of the value of precision if we look at some examples of the lack of it. Of all the possible varieties of loose wording we shall here consider three of the commonest types.

(1) The first of these results from the use of words of such general meaning that the burden of exact interpretation is put entirely on the reader—a shift of responsibility that makes for easy writing and hard reading. General words are rightly used when the writer wishes to express a general meaning, but when they are used because he shirks the labor of finding more definite words, they leave the outlines of his thought hazy and indeterminate.

Romeo and Juliet is a fine play. It has a fine plot, and each of the five acts contains at least one exceptionally fine scene. The opening scenes of plays are usually dull, but in *Romeo and Juliet* the opening scene is as fine as any in the play. There are several fine characters, too. Every person, regardless of sex or age, will admit that Juliet is a fine heroine. Even the old nurse, who is only a minor character, is fine because she is usually funny. The poetry in which the play is written is very fine.

The *Century Dictionary* records fifteen different meanings for *fine*, but these are hardly sufficient to cover all the meanings that the word may have, or should have, in this passage. What, for instance, does "a fine plot" mean?

Perhaps it means that the plot is unified, so deftly articulated that one scene leads naturally to another, and so interesting that the attention of the audience never wavers; perhaps *fine* means more than that, or perhaps considerably less. But whatever precise meaning the word may have for a reader, he must himself provide that meaning. The trouble does not, of course, lie in the word itself; given a proper context, *fine* can be made to work definitely:

1. It is necessary to use a drawing-pen, because the points of ordinary pens are not fine enough.
2. De Quincey's style is capable of expressing some very fine shades of meaning.

(2) The second type of failure to be precise results from the ineffective use of figurative words:

When we attempt to grow in accuracy of speech, our first task must be the avoidance of humpy and lumpy diction.

What, precisely, is "humpy and lumpy diction"? Even with the best will to understand, we cannot feel sure that we have exactly grasped the writer's meaning. Because these words are open to several interpretations, one seemingly as good as another, the meaning behind them remains uncertain. Before we can learn to avoid choosing "humpy and lumpy" words, we need to be told more definitely what kind of words these may be. Figurative use is so valuable that one would not wish to do without it even in plain expositions; but every figurative expression which does not convey a reasonably definite meaning should be replaced by an expression which does.

(3) The third kind of failure to be precise is due to a lack of discrimination between shades of meaning, or to ignorance of the exact signification of a word. In a hit-or-

miss style the writer or speaker uses the first word that comes to mind if it seems at all near his meaning, and he is not careful to make sure that he understands all the words he uses. Of such a speaker Samuel Rogers remarked:

"Sir, he was a fool. The right word never came to him. If you gave him a bad shilling he'd say, 'Why, it's as good a shilling as ever was born.' You know he ought to have said *coined*. *Coined*, sir, never entered his head."

Let us look at another example or two of "approximate" diction:

The house recalls one of the most difficult periods of his life, when, it is said, he was hunted and persecuted by debtors to an alarming extent. He selected the house, it is stated, purposely as a sort of refuge from duns.

Does the writer really mean *debtors?* A little knowledge of human nature leads us to think that he does not, and the word *duns* in the next sentence convinces us that in spite of what he says he must really mean *creditors*. In this instance we can easily make the correction on the writer's behalf. But in the example which follows we cannot so readily do the writer's work for him:

The features here most enjoyed seem to be descriptive articles of cities and the "Happy Habit." These are greatly appreciated by men and women alike, and are conclusive of the people of today, who are keenly alive to whatever concerns political and social questions on the material progress and prosperity of the country.

What does *conclusive* mean as it is here used? We can do little more than guess. Some of us might, perhaps, put *characteristic* or *typical* in the place of *conclusive*. But then we should find ourselves forced to make other corrections that would amount, practically, to doing the writer's think-

ing for him. When the meaning of a passage is so well concealed, most readers will not spend much time in digging for it unless they are confident it is genuine hidden treasure.

The fundamentals of precision. If we look now at a passage of precise writing, we may discover three unalterable conditions of precision. The subject of the quotation which follows is familiar to most of us, for everyone who is at all acquainted with lake, pond, river, or ocean has seen the water ruffled by puffs of wind. To many, no doubt, the subject would seem worth only a passing stereotyped phrase.

> Ever and anon the wind seems to drop down from over the hills in strong puffs, and then spread and diffuse itself in dark, fan-shaped figures over the surface of the water. It is glorious to see how it sports on the watery surface. You see a hundred such nimble-footed puffs drop and spread on all sides at once, and dash on, sweeping the surface of water for forty rods in a few seconds, as if so many invisible spirits were playing tag there. It even suggests some fine dust swept along just above the surface, and reminds me of snow blowing over ice—and vapor curling along a roof, meandering like that often.[1]

In the first place, Thoreau is not depending on rough impressions, vague ideas, or hearsay, but upon what he sees with his own clear eyes. He has some distinct things to say. This is not so easy as it sounds; as Joseph Conrad puts it, in *Falk*, "I ought to have seen at once—but I did not; so difficult is it for our minds, remembering so much, instructed so much, informed of so much, to get in touch with the real actuality at our elbow." But easy or not, seeing the thing before our eyes, having distinct ideas instead of hazy ideas, is essential to precise writing. No matter what kind of subject a writer is treating—descriptive, narrative, exposi-

[1]Thoreau, *Early Spring in Massachusetts.*

tory, or argumentative—his ideas on that subject must be clear if his expression of them is to be sharp and unmistakable.

In the second place, Thoreau has chosen his words carefully, with scrupulous regard for their significations. He understands the meanings of the words he uses. Note the crucial words, those on which the ideas pivot, as it were: *drop, spread and diffuse itself, fan-shaped, sports, nimble-footed, dash, sweeping, fine dust, swept, curling, meandering.* These were not used at random. *Sports*, for example, is a better word for the purpose than *plays*. It conveys the definite idea of play that is buoyant, animated, full of movement. When Thoreau uses *playing* in the next sentence, he makes it definite by adding *tag*. We play tag, or we play chess; but tag is a sport and chess is not. In describing the puffs of wind, Thoreau had a choice to make from at least three synonymous expressions, *light-footed, fleet-footed,* and *nimble-footed.* The first indicates most strongly the idea of graceful dexterity; that is what we have in mind when we describe a dancer as light-footed. The second indicates speed; we should be more likely to call a runner fleet-footed than a dancer. The third indicates the meaning of the first two in combination; nimble-footed means to be light on one's feet and swift into the bargain. Of the three, this fits Thoreau's meaning most exactly. In thus understanding and distinguishing words lies the second fundamental of precision. The third fundamental is readily inferred from the second. It is obvious that we cannot make a choice unless we have a stock of words to choose from. And it is equally plain that the more copious our supply of words, the wider is the range of choice offered us, and the more likely are we to hit upon that particular word which best fits our meaning. Precision demands an adequate working vocabulary.

Acquiring a vocabulary. How shall we obtain command of such a vocabulary? One answer is that dictionaries, intelligently used, make a large stock of words available. We may wish, for instance, to describe a book, and we have in mind the general idea that it is stupid. But as that word does not quite fit our meaning, and as no satisfactory substitute comes to mind, we look up *stupid* in a good dictionary. There we find such possibilities as *silly, foolish, absurd, flat, tame, humdrum, pointless,* and *prosaic.* If none of these is just the right word, we look farther, taking our clue from the word that is closest to our meaning. Under *prosaic,* for example, other shades of meaning are suggested: *ordinary, commonplace, dull, uninteresting, vapid, bald.* The definitions and such illustrative quotations as may be given help us to distinguish the differences in meaning between the words suggested. Frequently the dictionary goes further and itself points out distinctions between words that are closely allied:

Antecedent may denote simple priority in time, implying no direct connection between that which goes before and that which follows: as, the striking of one clock may be always *antecedent* to the striking of another with no causal connection between them. *Antecedent* and *previous* may refer to that which goes or happens at any distance in advance, *preceding* is limited to that which is immediately or next before; an *antecedent* event may have happened at any time before; the *preceding* transaction is the one completed just before the one with which it is compared; a *previous* statement or chapter may be in any part of the book that has gone before; the *preceding* statement or chapter comes next before without an interval. *Previous* often signifies first by right; as, *a previous* engagement. *Foregoing* is used only of that which is spoken or written; as, the *foregoing* statements. *Anterior,* while it can be used of time, is coming to be employed chiefly with reference to place; as, the *anterior* lobes of the brain. *Prior* bears exclusive reference to time, and commonly where that which is first in time is first also in right; as, a *prior* demand. *Former* is

used of time, or of position in written or printed matter, not of space in general. We can say *former* times, a *former* chapter, etc., but not the *former* part of a garden; we should say the *front* part of a garden, the *forward* car of a train. *Former* has a close relation, or sharp contrast, with something following; the *former* always implies the latter, even when not fully expressed . . .[1]

Besides the dictionary there are a number of useful books that specialize in giving synonyms and in distinguishing their meanings. Among the best of these are Allen's *Synonyms and Antonyms,* Crabb's *English Synonyms,* Fernald's *English Synonyms, Antonyms, and Prepositions,* March's *Thesaurus Dictionary of the English Language,* and Smith's *Synonyms Discriminated.* Roget's *Thesaurus of English Words and Phrases* does not define or discriminate, but it gives the key to a rich store of words and phrases.

But such aids are useful chiefly for occasional reference and for the conscious acquisition of a wider vocabulary. They cannot take the place of a good working stock of words ready for immediate service. Normally the writer's vocabulary keeps pace with the broadening and deepening of his interests and knowledge; as the mind grows, command of words grows also. New ideas, fresh points of view, bring new words. Thus the growth of an individual's vocabulary resembles, on a small scale, the process of expansion that from Anglo-Saxon times down to the present has enriched and diversified the English language.

There are various ways of increasing the working vocabulary by systematic study. Robert Browning, when he made up his mind to be a poet, began a careful reading of Johnson's *Dictionary.* Theophile Gautier went further, not only studying the dictionary, but compiling one of his own made up of striking words and phrases which he collected from

[1] *College Standard Dictionary,* under the word *previous.*

his wide and curious reading. Charles Lamb enriched his vocabulary through constant reading of the Elizabethan dramatists. Professor Palmer, in *Self-Cultivation in English*, advocates the adoption and use of two new words each week (in the four expansive years of college the alert student will increase the number):

> It will not be long before the endless and enchanting variety of the world will begin to reflect itself in his speech, and in his mind as well. I know that when we use a word for the first time we are startled, as if a fire-cracker went off in our neighborhood. We look about hastily to see if anyone has noticed. But finding that no one has, we may be emboldened. A word used three times slips off the tongue with entire naturalness. Then it is ours forever, and with it some phase of life which had been lacking hitherto. For each word presents its own point of view, discloses a special aspect of things, reports some little importance not otherwise conveyed, and so contributes its small emancipation to our tied-up minds and tongues.

Lowell, in *The Study of Modern Languages*, counsels translation:

> In reading such books as chiefly deserve to be read in any foreign language, it is wise to translate consciously and in words as we read. There is no such help to a fuller mastery of our vernacular. It compels us to such a choosing and testing, to so nice a discrimination of sound, propriety, position, and shade of meaning, that we now first learn the secret of the words we have been using or misusing all our lives. . . .

Stevenson undertook a conscious imitation of models,[1] and so did Franklin, as he tells us in his *Autobiography:*

> About this time I met with an odd volume of the *Spectator*. It was the third. I had never before seen any of them. I bought

[1] See the well-known passage in "A College Magazine," in *Memories and Portraits*.

it, read it over and over, and was much delighted with it. I thought the writing excellent, and wished, if possible, to imitate it. With this view I took some of the papers, and making short hints of the sentiment in each sentence, laid them by a few days, and then, without looking at the book, tried to complete the papers again, by expressing each hinted sentiment at length, and as fully as it had been expressed before, in any suitable words that should come to hand. Then I compared my *Spectator* with the original, discovered some of my faults, and corrected them. But I found I wanted a stock of words, or a readiness in recollecting and using them, which I thought I should have acquired before that time if I had gone on making verses; since the continual occasion for words of the same import, but of different length, to suit the measure, or of different sound for the rime, would have laid me under a constant necessity of searching for variety, and also have tended to fix that variety in my mind, and make me master of it. Therefore I took some of the tales and turned them into verse; and, after a time, when I had pretty well forgotten the prose, turned them back again.

There are many methods to suit many minds. But more important than this or that method is the determination to know words enough to make real self-expression possible. In the course of time an interest in words will follow upon that determination, and the student will find that he is doing with some zest and intellectual curiosity what at first, perhaps, he had to force himself to do by power of will. Occasional reference to such works as Skeat's *Etymological Dictionary* and Greenough and Kittredge's *Words and Their Ways* will help to stimulate this interest. It is worth stimulating, being the best guarantee that as time goes on the student will cease to be cramped in his expression by an inadequate vocabulary.

EXERCISES

(*a*) Point out all the words used loosely or incorrectly in the following sentences; wherever the context makes the meaning sufficiently plain, substitute a precise word for the vague word:

1. These towns will probably be transferred from villages of a few hundred to cities of 50,000 or over.
2. It was a hard walk against a cold, piercing wind, but the joyous company soothed the hardships.
3. One is constantly appalled in conversation by hearing college graduates say "acrost" for *across*, and making other "bad breaks" which in England could not be conjoined with an equal amount of culture and education.
4. Lowell's comparisons are so fresh and likely that they pique the imagination.
5. The work of boring the tunnel was installed only last April.
6. Miss Whitlock displayed Gounod's "The Palms" to the entire satisfaction of the large and critical audience.
7. I have never heard what transpired to the couple after they left Columbus.
8. We stopped six weeks at the Iron Mountain House last summer.
9. Many serious disorders of the digestive system can be traced to negligence of the teeth as a primary cause.
10. Official dishonesty, corruption, and inefficiency are just as eligible in an autocratic government as they are in a democratic government.
11. The experts predicate that Hughes will carry New York State by a substantial majority.
12. Moreover it is a healthy experience for anyone, as it is a good antidote for any Pharisaism he may suffer from.
13. I saw her first when she was playing Ophelia to Booth's Hamlet. Her voice effected me as though it were sweet and melancholy music.
14. Manton, who could scarcely believe his ears, glanced quickly and incredibly at the speaker, and then turned questioningly toward Clement.
15. That Carlstrom did not reach New York in a single flight was not due to the enormity of the distance to be covered but to an accidental failure of one of the engines.

16. The gentleman has a proscriptive right to delay the passage of this amendment as long as he can find words to utter and a voice to utter them with.

17. Often thoughts will arise which we desire to express and feel confident that we can express; but in the stress of composition they prove so nimble and illusive that they slip from our grasp and defy our best efforts.

18. "I am slowly smothering," whispered Eustacia. Langdon regarded untrustfully the large woman in black who monopolized the window, but spoke bravely in his silkiest voice, "Can I open the window for a moment, madam?"

19. It is a sight never to be forgotten to see the long line of newly arrived emigrants filing slowly past the government inspectors at Ellis Island.

20. The only way to account for the rather astonishing fact that heat was once thought to be a substance is to assign the cause to faulty observance of the simplest phenomena.

21. A writer must not only know the ordinary significance of a word, but must understand its connotation as well.

22. At just the right moment Metellus Cimber stepped forward and begged Caesar to recall from banishment Publius Cimber, his brother, who had been prescribed by Caesar's decree.

23. A dominant phase of nineteenth century literature was the popularity of the novel.

24. They were naturally amazed that any man of Dalby's perspicuity should have been taken in, even for an instant, by such an arrant imposture.

25. There appeared to be no getting through by that road, which was only a stretch of wet and sticky clay partly overflowed, too, in the lowest places, so they gave it up as impractical.

26. To climb a mountain under favorable conditions is more enervating than the best of tonics; it produces a mental buoyancy and physical exhilaration that must be experienced to be appreciated.

27. There is not nearly as much Biblical illusion in Shakespeare as in Milton.

28. Beyond these things he had little pride except that he claimed to have read every novel by a woman writer that had ever entered the Union Library.

29. We penetrated from San Francisco to New Orleans; but it was a losing season for me.

30. I am very glad that you can be with us during the holiday season. And it was thoughtful of you to send your acceptation so promptly, for now I can arrange a pleasant little party or two and make sure that the right people will be present.

31. The last speaker on the program was Dr. H—— R——, who gave an interesting portrayal of the most important phases of the electron theory.

32. Some of our largest insurance companies have compiled accurate figures which prove conclusively that the average longevity of the total abstentionist is paramount to that of even the so-called moderate drinker.

33. I was so worn-out after that heart-breaking tramp in the mud, and so glad to get my wet clothes off, that the small iron cot which Mills had provided for just such emergencies seemed the most luxuriant bed I had ever slept on.

34. Archibald treasured the picture, for he thought it an excessively good likeness.

35. It was quite in keeping with his customary modesty that directly he had been detected, so to speak, in this act of great courage, he should seek to deprecate his own valor.

36. Never in the history of the Republican party in the state of New York has it risen to a higher position of righteous expediency than it did in convention last Tuesday in the renomination of Governor Hughes. Its action is an epoch so significant in the party's independence of bossism that it will lead unselfish patriotism to the highest choice in voting for Governor Hughes to such an extent that future history in the political affairs of our nation will have a paragon in promises made and honestly fulfilled. It is an era that justifies a confidence that a man, such a man, has been indorsed by public pressure for what he has done that so guarantees a betterment for the future.

37. Now the short story has sprung up, and within its narrow limits description is evaporated to lowest terms.

38. The first and superficial part of exposition is to represent fact. To mention this as superficial is not to imply contempt for this much in itself. It is, however, a fundamental factor which can be taught and learned.

39. Most students are in accord that inter-collegiate athletics are a primary requisite of college life. Are they correct in this assumption? I believe that they are not. In this paper I propose to dissect their views and demonstrate that factors which either do not exist or are spun out of fallacies have been woven into most students' ideas of the question. If we remove these factors which permeate student arguments in favor of inter-collegiate athletics, we shall see that the residue is innocuous.

40. Another sentence feature, like the declarative form in offering seductive but often ineffective chances for variety, is the prevailing use of the third person.

(*b*) Point out differences in meaning between the words in each of the following groups:

1. connoisseur, expert, adept.
2. metropolis, capital.
3. heinous, odious, atrocious.
4. abstemious, temperate.
5. self-control, self-restraint.
6. rectify, correct, amend, reform.
7. invent, discover.
8. flavor, aroma, fragrance.
9. stop, stay, linger, remain.
10. behavior, conduct, demeanor.
11. continual, continuous.
12. ingenuous, frank, candid.

(*c*) For each of the following, find the word that comes closest to it in meaning:

inveterate	prolong	variety
aspiration	hearty	function
ambition	evident	compensation
despair	agility	tranquil

(*d*) Put synonyms in place of the italicized words in the following, and determine in each case whether there is gain or loss:

1. On these lonely hills and dales her *quiescent* glide was of a piece with the element she moved in. Her *flexuous* and stealthy figure became an *integral* part of the scene. At times

her *whimsical* fancy would intensify natural processes around her till they seemed a part of her own story. Rather, they became a part of it; for the world is only a psychological *phenomenon*, and what they seemed they were. The midnight airs and gusts, *moaning* among the tightly wrapped buds and bark of the winter twigs, were *formulae* of bitter reproach. A wet day was the expression of *irremediable* grief at her weakness in the mind of some *vague* ethical being.

2. As we sit in this wonderful air, many sounds—that of wood-chopping for one—come to our ears, agreeably *blunted*, or *muffled* even, like the drumming of a partridge, not sharp and *rending* as in winter. If a partridge should drum in winter, probably it would not *reverberate* so softly through the wood, and sound *indefinitely* far. Our voices even sound differently, and *betray* the spring. We speak as in a house, in a warm apartment still, with *relaxed* muscles and *softened* voices. The voice, like a woodchuck in its burrow, is met and *lapped in* and encouraged by all *genial* and sunny influences. There may be heard now, perhaps, under south hillsides and the south sides of houses, a slight *murmur* of conversation, as of insects, out of doors.

(*e*) Fill out the blanks in the following with the most appropriate words you can think of:

A European cannot spend an evening in an American drawing-room without———that the attitude of men to women is not that with which he is———at home. The———European man has usually a slight sense of———when he talks to a woman on serious subjects. Even if she is his superior in intellect, in character, in social rank, he——— that as a man he is her———, and consciously or unconsciously talks down to her. She is too much accustomed to this to ——— it, unless it becomes ——— palpable. Such a ——— does not cross an American's mind. He talks to a woman just as he would to a man, of course with more ——— of manner, and with a proper regard to the ——— likely to interest her, but giving her his ——— best, addressing her as a person whose ——— is understood by both to be worth as much as his own. Similarly an American lady does not expect to have conversation made to her. It is ——— as much her duty or pleasure to lead it as the man's

is, and more often than not she takes the burden from him, darting along with a gay ——— which puts to shame his slower ———.

(*f*) Write down all the specific words and expressions you can think of that express shades of meaning included in the general meaning of the following (as *stalk, strut, stride,* etc., express meanings included in *walk*):

a soldier engine to run to kill

(*g*) Write a short theme describing those ways of enlarging the vocabulary that seem best adapted to your own use.

(*h*) Compose sentences which will illustrate unmistakably a precise use of the following words:

implication	calculate	divergent
consistent	disinterested	credible
recollect	respectively	avocation
transpire	patronize	liable
economical	decisive	aggravate

II. Suggestiveness

Connotation. Besides their power of conveying definite meanings, words have the power of *connoting,* of implying or suggesting something beyond their hard-and-fast significations. We considered this fact in a broad way in the preceding chapter when we observed that certain words and expressions were appropriate enough to intimate speech and writing but were out of place in formal expression. The underlying reason why a student might greet a classmate with "Hello, old man" and a few moments later greet a professor with "Good-morning, sir" may now be stated in this way: the former expression connotes easy familiarity based on equality in age and other conditions, whereas the latter connotes respect, consideration, and courtesy. That

a skillful choice of words involves not only meaning but connotation will be better understood, probably, when we have looked at the examples in the following paragraphs.

Words vary considerably in their power of connoting: some words, such as *and*, *but*, *eleven*, *is*, and *are*, have little or no connotation for most of us; while others, such as *brother*, *friend*, *home*, *honor*, and *integrity*, may have a great deal. Words of the latter kind, through association with our feelings, moods, or experiences, become charged with a suggestiveness not recorded in dictionaries; rightly used—not merely listed in a textbook—they stir our memories and awaken, oftentimes, associated emotions. "Cut these words, and they would bleed; they are vascular and alive." The word *home*, in one sense, means *domicile*, *habitation*, *residence;* but in what it suggests it is a very different word from these others. Observe how much more of the warmth and color of family life is connoted by *home*, in another sense, than by the chilly phrase *seat of domestic life and interests*. *House* and *residence* may mean the same thing; but in flavor *house* is a plain and rather non-commital word, while *residence* is more pretentious, often suggesting a touch of ostentation. When a real estate dealer (or "realtor," as he likes to style himself) means to ask a stiff price for a house, he is prone to call it a *residence*, or an *estate*. *Female parent* is a cold-blooded phrase, yet in meaning it differs not a whit from *mother*, a word rich in emotional content for most sons and daughters. *Parents* and *offspring* are matter-of-fact words; *father and mother* and *children* denote the same relationships, but with a clearer suggestion of the intimacies and affections involved. A *cowboy* is a *cow-keeper*, but the mental images suggested by these words are quite different; the former does not bring to mind a barn-yard scene—at least to those whose ideas of the cowboy have been chiefly formed by tales

of adventure, the drawings of Frederic Remington, and the dashing and chivalrous heroes of the motion-pictures. Every ex-service man knows the connotative difference between *buddy* and *associate*. The more we consider words in this way, asking ourselves what they suggest apart from, or in addition to, their meanings, and how they may affect the feelings or imaginations of our readers, the better fitted we shall be to make good use of them.

Grouping words according to connotation. There can be no thorough classification of what words connote; for connotations depend largely on one's environment, training, personality, and even on accident. The connotations of the word *socialism* will not be the same for a conservative thinker and for a radical thinker; nor will *blood* have the same suggestions for a butcher that it has for a sensitive woman who faints when she cuts her finger. Even more variable and elusive are the connotations of proper names. The name *Bill Sikes* will not suggest the same kind of mental images to those who have not read *Oliver Twist* and to those who have. If we know *Kansas* only through our school geographies and occasional news dispatches, it is most unlikely that the word will connote for us all that it may for a "native son." Connotation, in brief, is much less fixed and uniform than is denotation.

But in any one social class, such as the class of cultivated men and women, there is likely to be substantial agreement as to the connotations of a great many words and expressions. We may be sure, for instance, that for the majority of cultivated people an expression like "Shut your face" will have unmistakably vulgar associations. Agreement may also be fairly counted on in the incomplete and merely illustrative grouping on the next page, though disagreement in some instances is likewise to be expected:

1. *Associated with prosaic commonplaces:* stewed tomatoes, shoestring, trousers, at the rate of, digestion, manicure scissors, haircut, etc.

2. *Cheapness or vulgarity:* gents, hold your jaw, booze, ain't, yours truly (=me), a skirt (=a girl), lady friend, etc.

3. *Stale sentimentality:* gems of poetry, nuggets of wisdom, midnight tresses, dreamy eyes, silv'ry moon, etc.

4. *Fashionable affectations:* mal de mer, dolce far niente, blasé, awfully charming, simply ripping, deucedly awkward, the people in our set, etc.

5. *Amusing or ludicrous:* merry-go-round, circus, landlubber, yokel, pate, top-knot, etc.

6. *Learning or pedantry:* sesquipedalian, valetudinarian, positivism, ratiocinate, atrabilious, etc.

7. *Homespun and racy:* tit for tat, cut and dried, peg away, piping hot, face the music, etc.

8. *Childhood:* once upon a time, fairy prince, mooly cow, birdie, etc.

9. *Romance:* the South Seas, Ceylon, coast of Labrador, Northwest passage, Spanish Main, cutlass, buried treasure, etc.

10. *Poetry:* blithe, haply, ivy-crowned, Titania, Proserpine, Camelot, etc.

11. *Elementary or strong feelings:* hate, wrath, jealousy, fear, horrible, valor, heroism, glory, hunger, thirst, tornado, hurricane, etc.

A different type of rough classification according to associations is given by O. W. Firkins in the course of a study of Emerson's prose:

A word is "plain" when it names an ordinary fact unpretendingly; it is "homely" when the fact or word has distinctly lost elegance; it is "familiar" when freely used by everyday mouths; it is "coarse" when it names unpleasant things, and, in the growth of this quality, it becomes "disgusting"; it is "brusque" when it becomes vigorous and unfeeling, and, when these qualities strengthen, it is called "rough"; it is "contemptuous" when the wish to degrade the

object becomes strong; and when excitement is added to contempt, it becomes "violent." *Wheelbarrow* is a plain word; *kettle* is both plain and homely; *off and on* is familiar; *stomach-ache* is coarse; *vomit* is disgusting; *dunce* is brusque, and *blockhead* is rough; *sniveling* is contemptuous, and *damnable* is violent.[1]

The power of suggestion. Evidently we cannot use a word to the greatest advantage unless we have some idea of what it is likely to suggest to our readers. In the highest reaches of the art of writing, the conveyance of emotions, this knowledge is very important. The following quotation from an editorial in the New York *Sun* vividly describes the suggestive power whereby words carry over to the reader a part, at least, of the feeling that was in the writer:

Suppose, for example, that you possess remarkable facility in grouping language, and that you have strong feelings upon some subject, which finally you determine to commit to paper. Your pen runs along, the words present themselves, or are dragged out, and fall into their places. You are a good deal moved; here you chuckle to yourself, and half a dozen lines further down a lump comes into your throat, and perhaps you have to wipe your eyes. You finish, and the copy goes to the printer. When it gets into print a reader sees it. His eye runs along the lines and down the page until it comes to the place where you chuckled as you wrote; then he smiles, and six lines below he has to swallow several times and snuffle and wink to restrain an exhibition of weakness. And then someone else comes along who is not so good a word juggler as you are, or who has no feelings, and swaps the words about a little, and twists the sentences; and behold the spell is gone, and you have left a parcel of written language duly charged with facts, but without a single feeling. . . .

But you don't find feelings in written words unless there were feelings in the man who used them. With all their independence they seem to be little vessels that hold in some puzzling fashion exactly what is put into them. You can put tears into them, as though they were so many little buckets; and you can hang smiles

[1] *Ralph Waldo Emerson*, p. 245.

along them, like Monday's clothes on the line, or you can starch them with facts and stand them up like a picket fence; but you won't get the tears out unless you first put them in. Art won't put them there. It is like the faculty of getting the quality of interest into pictures. If the quality exists in the artist's mind, he is likely to find means to get it into his pictures, but if it isn't in the man, no technical skill will supply it. So, if the feelings are in the writer and he knows his business, they will get into the words; but they must be in him first. It isn't the way the words are strung together that makes Lincoln's Gettysburg speech immortal, but the feelings that were in the man. But how do such little, plain words manage to keep their grip on such feelings? That is the miracle.

Avoiding blunders of association. In writing which does not aim to stir the reader's emotions or is not intended to give aesthetic pleasure, the problem of dealing successfully with verbal associations is much simpler. In the great bulk of ordinarily competent prose it is sufficient for a writer to avoid words or expressions that will arouse suggestions at variance with his subject or with the tone of his composition. He need not show skill in choosing words that will stimulate his reader's imagination to work in some desired direction, but he ought at least to see to it that he does not set going trains of thought or feeling which will collide with his own. We are assuming, now, that his purpose is serious. If it be humorous, however, he may seek the very incongruities that he would shun were he writing seriously:

> Suddenly the stillness was shattered by a shout behind him, a roar and a wail, a rending burst followed by a cry, that went yearning up into the night toward the critical stars and the cold, silvery dark concave of sky, as if to symbolize the impetuous onrush of human life and its high, unattainable aspirations.
>
> "Arash—ho'oe!"
>
> "Berry!" said Mr. Todd . . . "He's sneezing."[1]

[1]Arthur Colton, *Atlantic Monthly*, December, 1910.

Here the humor lies, of course, in the discrepancy between the associations aroused by some of the words in the description—*yearning, critical stars, unattainable aspirations,* for example—and the idea of sneezing. Serious writers are sometimes tricked into a degree of this humor unconsciously when they ignore the connotations of some of their words:

> We left the dying ebb that faintly lipped
> The flat red granite; so by many a sweep
> Of meadow smooth from aftermath we reached
> The griffin-guarded gates, and passed through all
> The pillared dusk of sounding sycamores,
> And crossed the garden to the gardener's lodge,
> With all its casements bedded, and its walls
> And chimneys muffled in the leafy vine.
> There, on a slope of orchard, Francis laid
> A damask napkin wrought with horse and hound,
> Brought out a dusky loaf that smelt of home,
> And, half-cut-down, a pasty costly-made,
> Where quail and pigeon, lark and leveret, lay,
> Like fossils of the rock, with golden yolks
> Imbedded and injellied. . . .

The effect of this passage borders on the mock-heroic, because such phrases as "dying ebb that faintly lipped," "griffin-guarded," and "pillared dusk of sounding sycamores" do not readily harmonize with the idea of a picnic. The writer and his friend left the beach, passed through some woods and a garden, and sat down to eat home-made bread and an expensive game-pie. Poetic associations are hard to reconcile with prosy facts such as these. Wordsworth, in spite of his desire to "adopt the very language of men," knew that the connotations of *sore throat* or *tonsillitis* would ruin his effect, and so he used a circumlocution:

> The winds of March, smiting insidiously,
> Raised in the tender passage of the throat
> Viewless obstruction.

If words with prosy associations seem out of place in a poetic setting, poetic or archaic words seem equally ill at ease in plain modern prose;

Young Freevill is a typical Elizabethan gallant, very frank in his utterances, and not burthened with an excess of modesty.

The archaic form of *burthened* seems to be an affectation here. The writer is not an Elizabethan, but a modern Englishman.

The good wind, the heaving deck, the spatter of spray, the slatting of canvas, and the whining song of the blocks revived in him the ardent interest of the yesteryears.

Yesteryears is altogether too poetic to be fitly used in this passage; it colors the sentence with sentimentality. The same is true of *purple-plaintive* in the following sentence:

When we emerged from the second-growth timber at the foot of the slope, we took a long view of the purple-plaintive hills which formed the southern extremity of the huge basin.

Purple-plaintive suggests an aesthete in a rather wan mood; *second-growth timber* and *southern extremity of the . . . basin* suggest a practical and observant man giving information. Connotations so lacking in harmony remind one of Lewis Carroll's "soup of the evening, beautiful, beautiful soup." There is, in brief, little excuse for using words filled with poetic associations if one is describing a method of putting shock-absorbers on a Ford car, or words that suggest smartness and flippancy if one is applying for a position in a bank. Fitness of phrase, then, may imply bareness of phrase; or it may imply "polysyllabic harmonies." In either case, matter and manner must go together, or we are writing badly, because falsely.

EXERCISES

(*a*) Bring to class for discussion a list of a dozen words having for you vivid connotations.

(*b*) Make additions to the list of words grouped according to associations, on page 480. Can you suggest any additional groups?

(*c*) Discuss the fitness of the italicized words and phrases in the following passages from the point of view of connotation:

1. Lest there be a misapprehension at the outset, let it be remembered that I was not employed to unearth the truth. My appointed task was to present a newspaper portrait of the American *chink* that should be favorable to him, and yet palatable to the Caucasian.

2. Being well versed in transcendent mystics, psychology, occult science, and theosophy, I will widen the doors of prosperity, peace, health, and happiness. I remove all kinds of evil influences, spells, inhibitions, pains, and *bunions*.

3. Every setting sun that goes down upon a dying day and leaves the world to darkness and to dreams sheds its last rays upon the kneeling forms of thousands who bless our *gobs* and *doughboys*.

4. A select company of notable theatrical stars, under the *chaperonage* of Al Jolson, left on a special train early this morning for Washington, where they will be the guests for breakfast, at the White House, of President Coolidge.

5. We'll take every child in all America and put him in the public schools of America. My son and daughter and all other children will go side by side to school. We will build a homogeneous people; we will *grind out* Americans just like *meat out of a grinder*.

6. Money poured in upon him, and he spent it in the manner of the actors, his friends. That is to say, he arrayed himself with striking elegance, surrounded himself with regal objects of art, and was ministered to by hordes of lackeys. The man, indeed, was always far more the actor himself than the literary *gent*.

7. The letters printed by Mr. Moses and Miss Gerson are instructive and at the same time devastating. They depict a grown man with the interests and manners of a somewhat intelligent girl of seventeen. His reputation for cleverness seems destined to *go blooie.*

8. The Secretary of the Navy *scolded* Capt. —— severely for his carelessness.

9. Sunday will be Mother's Day, and what could be more appropriate than to remember Mother with some of the things that are nearest to her desire? *Special,* Saturday, *10-quart Aluminum Dishpan only 98c.*

10. Although a knowledge of the grammatical structure of the sentence is less important than clear, logical, unified thinking, only a few *high-brows* can dispense with a conscious understanding of grammar. The ordinary *poor fish* cannot hope to write passable English without a definite knowledge of what a sentence is.

11. The last shipment of peaches arrived in very bad condition. Seven baskets had to be thrown away at once. Most of the remaining fruit was bruised or spotted. *Methinks* you wait too long before picking.

12. Hawthorne is *scratch man* among American novelists in the exquisite clarity and delicate precision of his style.

13. Slides are useful to the lecturer, teacher, and entertainer, for they enable a picture to be shown to a great number of people simultaneously. Slides prepared for the purpose may be used for advertising for the same reason, the image being projected on a screen set up in some suitable place—an empty shop-window, *peradventure,* or the side of a building.

14. In reply to your *epistle* of March 21, I regret to state that the bar soap you ordered is no longer in stock.

15. I love to take my sewing out on this little porch on a sunny afternoon in the fall, when the leaves of *yon* beech are *flavescent.*

16. Develop your command of words in order to make a good *spiel.*

III. Freshness

The need of freshness. Too constant repetition, in the words of Charles Lamb, "withers and blows upon a fine passage." Thus phrases and figures of speech and separate words become stale through overuse; and what everyone knows and most people say is platitude. For the writer this means, among other things, that he must use words freshly if his work is to be interesting and expressive.

The students in a college class in composition will differ in knowledge, experience, sympathy, aptitude, humor, and ambition. Yet their compositions will often be much alike. Why have the themes of two very different students so little individuality, so little of a personal flavor? One reason—and the only one that concerns us just now—is that both of these students depend too much upon the stock phrasing of the day. Instead of using words precisely and making phrases which fit his meaning exactly, each one turns to the mental pigeon-holes where he keeps his outfit of current phrases, standard comparisons, and "words of the hour." This is an easy way of writing and a sure way of being commonplace and colorless. But this is not all. Overuse has dulled the edge of this hackneyed diction until it no longer cuts clean and true to the line of the writer's meaning.

When a hundred or more novels, during the course of a year, are announced by their publishers as "strong, gripping, and vital," or even "epoch-making," do not these words lose something of their force for thinking people? Looking back over the history of English fiction, what year do we find that produced half-a-dozen novels really worthy of such description? Either we are living in a halcyon age of literature, or these are mere catch-words. For such terms sensible readers commonly substitute words of real meaning.

If eight out of ten persons who speak of a tree standing near a farmhouse describe it as "standing like a sentinel," does the comparison seem apt? That depends on the tree and on the state of mind of the person who sees it. In most cases the comparison is not apt, but merely second-hand. The writer has not taken the trouble to see things for himself and to set down honest and precise words about them, but has made shift to get along with a little pawnbroker's finery. And only the inexperienced are deceived by it. The italicized expressions in the following quotation have lost their force and grown stale through too much repetition. No one out of his teens would think of taking them at their face value.

> Her letters, dated from Craigenputtock, are *bright as the unpolluted sunshine, breezy as the mountain air,* hopefully *babbling like the brooks that hurried to the valley.*

If we would write freshly, giving our thought an expression of its own, we must use words honestly, with a genuine regard for their meanings.

Triteness. The most out-worn of trite expressions are safely buried; except by way of burlesque, no one would use *alabaster brow, in the gloaming,* or *the jeweled hand of beauty.* But others are decidedly active, if the paradox may be allowed, and will creep into our work if we are not on guard against them. As a rule these jaded expressions are phrases—combinations of adjective and noun, adverb and verb, and so on—rather than single words; and figurative expressions rather than literal. Single words used literally and exactly rarely become trite. The hundreds of common words that are used over and over again in plain expression of fact are in no sense trite. But single words may become trite if they are used affectedly or in response

to some current fashion in words. In the headlines of some newspapers every fire, even a cellar smudge, is a *blaze;* to express any kind of affirmation is *to favor;* to criticize anything or offer a suggestion for its improvement is *to assail;* every investigation is a *probe;* nearly all lecturers are *noted;* most events are *big.* Some years ago the word *crisis* had lost most of its force through abuse in the newspapers. Every turn in a long series of negotiations between our government and that of Germany had been called a *crisis.* When a real crisis did occur and led to the breaking of diplomatic relations with Germany, the newspaper men found that the old word was then too weak and so had to put the strange-looking word *super-crisis* into their headlines. Vague thinking, too, trying to mask behind fine-sounding terms creates hackneyed style. *Environment, temperament, evolution,* and *complex* (noun), for example, are useful words if a writer has a definite meaning to convey by them; but as they are popularly used, they may mean anything or nothing.

There follows a list of trite phrases, including some words that have recently been overworked. While this list is far from complete, it should serve to show unmistakably what trite expressions are like; and it may, perhaps, open some students' eyes to a hackneyed phrase or two that they have been unconsciously using.

abreast of the times
along these lines
anguish of despair
architect of his fortunes
ardent admirer
artistic temperament
atmosphere
at one fell swoop
awfully
bated breath
beckoning hand of fate
beggars description
better late than never
bloom of youth
bosom of Mother Earth (nature)
bosom of the deep
bountiful repast
brilliant career

bromidic
brood with infinite yearning
budding genius
busy as a bee
canopy of heaven
captain of industry
certain air of distinction
challenge
close to nature
community of interests
complexion like peaches and cream
connubial bliss
consensus of opinion
considerably the worse for wear
conspicuous by his absence
coverlet of snow
cup that cheers
dazzling prospect
deadly earnest
deafening roar, applause
decadent
depth of winter
depths of despair
devouring element
dews of heaven
diaphanous attire
discreet silence
distance lends enchantment
dominant issue
doomed to disappointment
doting parent
downy couch
dreadfully
dull thud
eliminate
environment
epistolary effort
epoch-making discovery
evolutionary process
factor in the situation
fair sex
fatal gift of beauty
feathered choir, songsters
festive board
feverish haste
fiber of his being
field of endeavor
finger of destiny
fleecy clouds
foeman worthy of his steel
fond parent
force of circumstances
fragrant weed
fringed eyelids
frozen music
fulsome praise
genuine impression
gesture (figurative use)
gilded rays, youth
gleaming spires
glowing cheeks
graft
green with envy, jealousy
gripping
gruesome experience
happy pair
heartfelt thanks
heart of nature
heart's content
heavenly day
he-man
horny handed son of toil
howling of the wind
hymeneal altar
ideal day
immortal bard
infinite sorrow
in the public eye
intrigue (verb)

iron constitution, nerve
irony of fate
lamp of day
lamp of memory
last but not least
last sad rites
launched into eternity
lavish profusion
light of his eyes
limpid stream
liquid depths
long-felt want
loom of time, fate
love-light in her eyes
luminous depths
lure of the land, city
manly form
man of the hour
method in his madness
mirrored in her eyes
mob psychology
monarch of all he surveys
more easily imagined than described
myriad lights
Napoleon of finance
nipped in the bud
oceans of time
old Father Time
old Sol
open sesame
orb of day
own vine and fig tree
pageantry of life
paramount
passed away
the passing show
path of rectitude
pearly dewdrops (teeth)
peeping stars
perfectly splendid
perish the thought
persistent rumor
personal magnetism
picturesque
plaudits of the crowd
plunged in gloom
poetic justice
poor but honest
poor but proud
potent factor
primrose path
professorial chair
promising future
proud possessor
pure as the driven snow
purling brooks
purple patches
ravishing beauty
red-blooded
replete with interest
rosebud mouth
rosy cheeks
ruby lips
rude habitation
ruling passion
sadder but wiser
sea of faces
sea of life
self-made man
shackles of ignorance
shady nook
ship of state
shining orb
shuttle of fate
sickening thud
silence is golden
silence reigned supreme
silvery locks
the simple life

skeleton in the closet
snow-capped peaks
social consciousness
social uplift
the soul of honor
splendid concert, etc.
spotless as a bride
stagger humanity
starry eyes
the stars in their courses
stimulating
stir the chords of memory
strenuous life
struggle for existence
student body
succulent bivalve
sunny disposition, smile, South
superhuman efforts
sweet girl graduate
sweets to the sweet
swift as thought
temperament
thunderous applause
too full for utterance
toothsome viands
transpire
tree standing like a sentinel
ultimatum
unearned increment
vale of sorrow, tears
vast concourse
veil of obscurity, mystery
velvet lawn
velvety skin
venture a suggestion
walk of life
watery grave
wave of enthusiasm
waves mountain high
wedded bliss
wends his way
when my ship comes in
wonderful
wrapped in mystery

In regard to trite expressions in general, it should be understood that the occasional use of those which are least noticeable—and who can honestly boast of never using them?—is not a serious offense. But when the familiar comparisons and the familiar couplings of noun and adjective pervade a composition, the writing is stale and shopworn and the reader feels that "there is no new thing under the sun."

"Fine writing." It will have been observed that several phrases in the preceding list of trite expressions are "flowery." The use of florid language makes what is called "fine writing," a straining after effects of impressiveness, grandeur, elevation, or beauty. As "fine writing" is usually a feeble imitation of genuine eloquence, dignity, or elegance, it is

apt to be stale. How ludicrous it really is may be seen in the following quotations from the *Congressional Record* together with the burlesque (printed in italics) made upon them by a witty editorial writer in the New York *Sun:*

This trip once made remains in the memory like music which has died upon the ear, yet lives with melody within the vaulted sanctuary of the soul. The very recollection of that country at this time of the year calls up woods delightfully, immaturely green, where the breezes which play upon the harp of nature are sweet with newly plowed fields and invigorating with the ozone released from a million shooting plants. On a day like Saturday the tender sky bends down so that one can almost touch its blue. Threading their laughing way through brown fields and green woods can be seen and heard silver brooks, joyous with new life, released from winter's thrall, playing in merriest glee with the nimble sunbeams who strive to catch the white foam as it breaks over stones and pebbles.

O'er the long reaches of the hills of song Dithyramb Dick yodels to General Sambo Bowles and both to Passaic. Gallop apace, ye fiery-footed steeds! Hoof it, ye pampered jades of Asia! Flowers fall from Burbling Bob's lips to spring up by the wayside. Cherubs and Cupids play leapfrog and foot-and-a-half at the cross-roads. All nature grins:

Such a ride is a poem and a romance. For long miles nature dreams or seems to dally with her shrubs and grasses. Earth seems in love with heaven as it lies languorously gazing upward and the heaven bends down smiling. with sunlight to kiss the warm, full, pouting lips of earth.

Man must long to behold the scene and he, too, must respond to the warm kisses of the sun till his heart is like a garden of rosebuds and his spirit is filled with the fragrance of lilac blossoms.

And all the cows moo with ecstasy and all the tree toads chant "My Old Passaic Home." Hohokus, Tallmans, Monsie are enchanted spots henceforth, gardens of rosebuds and lilacs. We long to behold the scene and Burbling Bob dreaming and dallying with his shrubs, his feet, and the warm pouting lips of the New Jersey Muse.

The "fine writer" dresses up the simplest things for parade and show. He is discussing the effect of country life on Thomas Hardy, the novelist: Hardy was much in the open, was a close observer, and was sensitive to the seasonal changes. Note how ill the manner accords with the ideas:

> Around him the cycle of the seasons rolled their panorama, and, suckled at the heart of nature, he felt its pulsations of renewed being, and the ebb of energies when the branches clattered in late autumn.

It is funny enough for Mr. Micawber to speak of a time when "Mrs. Micawber had not yet been solicited to plight her faith at the Hymeneal altar," but unless we are seeking a humorous effect it is better to follow the advice Thackeray gives through Mr. Yellowplush: "You might call a hat a 'swart sombrero,' 'a glossy four-and-nine,' 'a silken helm, to storm impermeable, and lightsome as the breezy gossamer'; but, in the long run, it's as well to call it a hat. It *is* a hat."

Euphemism. Euphemism, the use of a circumlocution or a substitute word to soften or disguise facts which the writer hesitates to mention frankly, is a form of "fine writing" that is often justified. It is a habit of speech, certainly, that goes back as far as our knowledge of English can carry us. In *Beowulf*, for instance, we find such euphemisms for "death" as "he chose the other light," "men's gladness he gave up and God's light chose," and

> Forth he fared at the fated moment,
> sturdy Scyld to the shelter of God.[1]

Many plain words are so degraded by vulgar associations that they may not appear in decent company. When the

[1] F. B. Gummere's translation.

facts which they denote must be dealt with, euphemism is natural and convenient. The reason why a certain type of euphemism is so popular is amusingly stated by Benjamin Franklin—though most of the examples he uses have long since dropped out of hearing:

> It argues some shame in the drunkards themselves, in that they have invented numberless words and phrases to cover their folly, whose proper significations are harmless, or have no signification at all. They are seldom known to be *drunk*, though they are very often *boozey, cogey, tipsey, foxed, merry, mellow, fuddled, groatable, confoundedly cut, see two moons,* are *among the Philistines, in a very good humor, see the sun,* or *the sun has shone upon them;* they *clip the King's English,* are *almost froze, feaverish, in their altitudes, pretty well entered,* etc. In short, every day produces some new word or phrase which might be added to the vocabulary of the *tiplers;* but I have chose to mention these few, because if at any time a man of sobriety and temperance happens to *cut himself confoundedly,* or is *almost froze,* or *feaverish,* or *accidently sees the sun,* etc., he may escape the imputation of being *drunk,* when his misfortune comes to be related.[1]

But euphemism may also be affected, silly, or even vulgar. There are "social circles," as H. C. Bunner points out, in which one never hears the words *men* and *women*, but only *gentlemen* and *ladies*. It is affectation, too, that speaks of all single women under sixty or thereabouts as *girls*. It is silly to say *inexpressibles, unmentionables,* or *nether garments* if one means *trousers;* or to say "We performed our ablutions in the lake," instead of "We bathed in the lake." *Pedal extremity, lower limb,* and *don one's attire,* for *foot, leg,* and *dress,* are further examples. It is vulgar to avoid the word *birth* by such a circumlocution as "a circumstance of the most gratifying description, which *will* happen occasionally in the best-regulated families";[2]

[1] *Dogood Papers,* No. 12.
[2] Dickens, *Seven Sketches of Our Parish.*

the facetiousness of such phrasing in this connection is itself a sin against good taste.

False and true ornament. The objection to "fine writing" is not an objection to legitimate literary ornament. It is an insistence, rather, that style should be in harmony with the ideas expressed, that plain facts are best stated in plain words. Richness of thought or emotion may well be clothed in rich language. Contrast the genuine ornateness of the following passage from Ruskin with the sham ornateness of the passages quoted in the *Sun* editorial (page 493); there is nothing in the eloquent quotation before us to set us smiling at the expense of its author:

For all other rivers there is a surface, and an underneath, and a vaguely displeasing idea of the bottom. But the Rhone flows like one lambent jewel; its surface is nowhere, its ethereal self is everywhere, the iridescent rush and translucent strength of its blue to the shore, and radiant to the depth.

Fifteen feet thick, of not flowing, but flying water; not water, neither—melted glacier, rather, one should call it; the force of the ice is with it, and the wreathing of the clouds, the gladness of the sky, and the continuance of Time.

Waves of clear sea are, indeed, lovely to watch, but they are always coming or gone, never in any taken shape to be seen for a second. But here was one mighty wave that was always itself, and every fluted swirl of it, constant as the wreathing of a shell. No wasting away of the fallen foam, no pause for gathering of power, no helpless ebb of discouraged recoil; but alike through bright day and lulling night, the never-pausing plunge, the never-fading flash, and never-hushing whisper, and, while the sun was up, the ever-answering glow of unearthly aquamarine, ultramarine, violet-blue, gentian-blue, peacock-blue, river-of-paradise blue, glass of a painted window melted in the sun, and the witch of the Alps flinging the spun tresses of it forever from her snow.

The innocent way, too, in which the river used to stop to look into every little corner. Great torrents always seem angry, and great rivers too often sullen; but there is no anger, no disdain, in

the Rhone. It seemed as if the mountain stream was in mere bliss at recovering itself again out of the lake-sleep, and raced because it rejoiced in racing, fain yet to return and stay. There were pieces of wave that danced all day as if Perdita were looking on to learn; there were little streams that skipped like lambs and leaped like chamois; there were pools that shook the sunshine all through them, and were rippled in layers of overlaid ripples, like crystal sand; there were currents that twisted the light into golden braids, and inlaid the threads with turquoise enamel; there were strips of stream that had certainly above the lake been mill-streams, and were looking busily for mills to turn again; there were shoots of stream that had once shot fearfully into the air, and now sprang up again laughing that they had only fallen a foot or two—and in the midst of all the gay glittering and eddied lingering, the noble bearing by of the midmost depth, so mighty, yet so terrorless and harmless, with its swallows skimming in spite of petrels, and the dear old decrepit town as safe in the embracing sweep of it as if it were set in a brooch of sapphire.[1]

Here is true ornament—a rich and beautiful style. What looks like gold is here really gold, not tinsel. The quotations from "Burbling Bob" are filled with pretense. Such phrases as "the vaulted sanctuary of the soul," "brooks . . . playing in merriest glee," "nimble sunbeams who strive to catch the white foam," "the warm, full, pouting lips of earth," and "his heart is like a garden of rosebuds," are threadbare tawdriness. They are mere conventional shams which held no content of truth for the writer and can hold none for an intelligent reader. This distinction between false and true ornament must be felt by everyone who is to make much progress in the art of writing. For most of us, in all probability, the wise course is to forego attempts at high flights of eloquence and to cultivate a plain and lucid style.

[1]John Ruskin, *Praeterita.*

EXERCISES

1. Bring to class for discussion two advertisements: one weak, because tritely phrased; the other vigorous, because freshly phrased.

2. What words or phrases in the list of trite expressions on pages 489-492 are you conscious of having used? Are there any that you use frequently?

3. Make as many additions to the list on pages 489-492 as you can.

4. Find an example (preferably in a newspaper head-line) of a word that has lost force by being over-used or abused.

5. Comment on the diction of the following passages:

(*a*) An inter-organization dance, the first of its kind in all the long history of the college, was held in the splendid ballroom of the Hotel Hanover on Wednesday evening. The affair was quite a brilliant event and a decided success. Seventy-five undergraduates, with their fair partners, followed the gentle Terpsichore during the evening's entertainment.

At nine o'clock the first bewitching strains of Weinberger's Orchestra were first heard, and soon the masters of the ancient art filled the polished floor of the ballroom. The dancing continued for five delightful hours until the wee sma' hour of two, during which time twenty-four scheduled dances were agreeably rendered. Tasty refreshments were served during the intermission.

President and Mrs. ..... graced the chaperones' chairs.

(*b*) With sleepy lids veiling their eyes, and brows knitted by reveries, knot by knot and loop by loop, the silky yarn grows in grace beneath the swift fingers of inscrutable weavers—the strange, silent, and pensive geniuses of sandy solitudes. Morose, perfidious, nomadic, but gifted with the power to paint marvelous thread pictures.

And such colors! They influence the sight as music does the ear. The deep diapason of the reds; the flute notes of the blues; the cymbal cadences of the creams; the castanet tinklings of the pinks; the violin quiver and leap of every tone that nature knows mingle and merge into eye-melody.

Medallions brilliant as the jewels of Baroda and Visapur; geometrical designs as intricate and delicate as the stained windows of an old-world cathedral; palace and prayer patterns lustrous with bronze-tinted palms and velvety blooms; sunbursts of gold, cobalt, rose, turquoise, orange, fawn, and ivory; arabesques and mosaics in colors as true as Cloisonné; floriated, shawl and Fereghan figures within bold Sarabend borders.

Oriental rugs—the aurora borealis of soft fleece and opulent dyes.

They are works of art. The skeptical and pedantic feel their charm and are moved to sybaritic indulgence. They suggest the *far niente* of divan and piano and soft lights—of luxury and dreams.

Perhaps this thrall of sentiment is created by the mental effect of thinking about their associations.

6. Give an example of euphemism.

7. Substitute modern equivalents for some of the euphemisms given by Franklin, page 495.

8. Find a brief passage that seems to you trite or flowery in phrasing.

9. Find a brief passage which you consider legitimately rich and ornamented.

IV. Wordiness

Wordiness destroys force. Needless words are a waste of energy. They offer resistance to the transmission of thought, dull the attention, and finally lead to boredom. Whenever words are multiplied unnecessarily, force is diminished. The tedious writer is usually found to have had the "fatal gift of fluency," and to have used that gift unchecked by rigorous self-criticism—enjoying the stream of words that flowed easily from his pen. There is irony in the fact that this enjoyment is likely to be solitary.

Every word in a sentence should perform a definite task. It should not be there by accident or mere overflow of the

writer's vocabulary. A sentence should be a working unit in which each word has its share of labor. The word which does not thus bear its part of the strain, which is an idle member, is worse than useless; it is an obstacle to force and trenchancy, diverting the reader's attention from the real business of the sentence and clogging the progress of the thought.

Wordiness is a common fault. Few books are produced that would not profit by excision. The remedy for wordiness lies chiefly in unsparing revision, for the fault is not usually so apparent during the rush of composition as it is later on in the calm of criticism. To direct our revision more intelligently, let us note the commoner forms of wordiness.

Tautology. Tautology is the repetition of an idea, whether in the same words or not.

Finally, in conclusion, let us glance briefly at the indirect consequences of the adoption of the proposed Licensing Act.

This is tautological because *in conclusion* merely repeats the idea expressed in *finally*, and *briefly* merely repeats the idea of brevity contained in *glance*. The meanings of the words overlap.

He had succeeded in that most difficult of all conquests, the winning of the universal respect and love of all his fellow-men.

"The winning of universal respect and love" expresses an idea that "of all his fellow-men" merely repeats.

Exaggerated instances of tautology are to be found in the speech of comic characters in plays and novels—in Fluellen's speeches, for example, in *Henry V:*

The Duke of Exeter is as magnanimous as Agamemnon; and a man that I love and honor with my soul, and my heart, and my

duty, and my life, and my living, and my utmost power. (Act III, Scene vi.)

Alexander, God knows, and you know, in his rage and his furies and his wraths, and his cholers, and his moods, and his displeasures, and his indignations, and also being a little intoxicates in his prains, did, in his ales and his angers, look you, kill his best friend, Cleitus. (Act IV, Scene vii.)

or in Mrs. Honour's, in *Tom Jones:*

"I in love, madam!" answers she; "upon my word, ma'am, I assure you, ma'am, upon my soul, ma'am, I am not." (Book IV, Chap. xiv.)

Pleonasm. Pleonasm is the addition of words that are unnecessary either for construction or for meaning.

Let me quote you my two favorite passages, which, though I have repeated them ten thousand times, still they rouse my manhood and steel my resolution. . . .

The grammatical subject of *rouse* is *which; they* is merely a pleonastic intruder.

In my own town, there are one or two persons striving for office who hesitate at doing nothing to accomplish their end.

The idiomatic expression *hesitate at nothing* is complete in itself without the word *doing.* The latter is not only pleonastic, but is equivocal if it is taken to have any function whatever in the sentence.

We may grant that a competent teacher of elocution has the power of imparting an intelligible and an expressive, if, perhaps, rather too "theatrical" a delivery.

Of the three indefinite articles coupled with *delivery,* two are pleonastic, adding nothing to construction or to sense.

In the following sentence the first *them* is pleonastic:

The prologues, and those parts which internal evidence justifies us in taking them to have been written after the thread of plan to string them on was conceived, are in every way more mature.

Circumlocution. Circumlocution consists in stating an idea in roundabout fashion—"beating about the bush." It is the antithesis of "plain speech."

There is a lad of ten, living in a Pennsylvania town where the schoolmasters still employ the rod in order that the child may not be spoiled, who found himself liable to that form of chastisement at the hands of his teacher.[1]

"That form of chastisement" is a circumlocution for *a whipping;* it is a circuitous way of saying a simple thing.

Excessive predication. Excessive predication consists in the use of a clause when a phrase or single word would express the idea with equal clearness and greater brevity. The clauses in the following sentence, for example, may be transformed into phrases without sacrifice of meaning:

1. This is but one of several reasons which explain the fact that the public was apathetic when Garrick made his first appearance.
2. This is but one of several reasons for the apathy of the public on Garrick's first appearance.

In the next example the clauses may be condensed into single words:

1. The walls were old; they were gray, and were hung with scarlet.
2. The gray old walls were hung with scarlet.

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[1]Note the wordiness of the sentence as a whole. For skillful use of circumlocution see page 507.

Predication is more abundant in the speech of children than in that of adults. It is more abundant, too, in old English narrative style than in modern. Part of the quaintness of the following passage from Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte D'Arthur* results from fullness of predication:

And as soone as he was within the shyp there he felte the most swetnes that euer he felt, and he was fulfylled with alle things that he thought on or desyred. Thenne he sayd, Fair swete fader Jhesu Cryst I wote not in what joye I am, For this joye passeth all erthely joyes that euer I was in. And so in this joye he leyd hymn doune to the shyps borde, and slepte tyl day. And when he awoke, he fonde there a fayre bed and therein lyenge a gentylwoman dede, the whiche was syr percyuales syster. And as Launcelot deuysed her, he aspyed in hir ryght hand a wrytte, the which he redde, the which told hym all the aduentures that ye haue herd tofore, and of what lygnage she was come. Soo with this gentylwoman syr Launcelot was a month and more. yf ye wold aske me how he lyued, he that fedde the pcple of Israel with manna in deserts, soo was he fedde. For euery day when he had sayd hes prayers, he was susteyned with the grace of the holy ghoost. So on a nyghte he wente to playe hym by the water syde, for he was somewhat wery of the shyp. And thenne he lystned and herd an hors come, And one rydynge upon him. And whanne he cam nygh he semed a knyghte. And soo he lete hym passe, and went there as the shyp was, and there he alyght, and toke the sadel and the bridel and putte the hors from hym, and went in to the shyp. And thenne Launcelot dressid vnto hym and said ye be welcome, and he ansuerd and salewed hym ageyne, and asked hym what is your name, for moche my hert guyeth vnto yow.

But it is well to avoid so much predication unless consciously seeking archaic flavor or childlike simplicity. The gain in brevity and vigor arising from the suppression of needless predicates is illustrated in the following examples:

1. On each side of the broad stream that flowed past them, the forests, which were somber and dull, stood without moving and

gave forth no sound. The trees were big and towered aloft, and at their feet grew nipa palms. These were trunkless, and their bunches of leaves, which were enormous and heavy, rose from the mud that formed the bank, and hung, but did not stir, over the water, which was brown, and which swirled and eddied.

1a. The forests, somber and dull, stood motionless and silent on each side of the broad stream. At the foot of the big, towering trees, trunkless nipa palms rose from the mud of the bank, in bunches of leaves enormous and heavy, that hung unstirring over the brown swirl of eddies.

2. The similarity that exists between them is more apparent than it is real.

2a. Their similarity is more apparent than real.

3. It is called Blue Hill because of the color it has on days when there is a mist.

3a. It is called Blue Hill because of its color on misty days.

Good writing is full of these invigorating compressions.

Verbosity. Verbosity is wordiness so pervasive that cutting out a word here and there will not avail much. When too many weeds get in among the seedlings, it is better to plow up and plant anew. The following are examples of verbosity and its radical cure:

1. Three members of the local police department were rendered temporarily unconscious by the action of the powerful fumes escaping from an ammonia pipe that had become broken.

1a. Three policemen were overcome by fumes from a broken ammonia pipe.

2. An excessive and tyrannical use of their regal power becomes a matter of almost necessary policy with kings, when the subjects over whom they rule are imbued with principles that justify rebellion against constituted authority.

2a. Kings will be tyrants from policy, when subjects are rebels from principle.

3. He is possessed of a highly-developed faculty or power of visualizing objects, which enables him to seize upon whatever is most typical in the thing that lies within his view; and in his presentation of an object he confines himself to its typical features alone.

3a. He has a great power of vision; seizes the very type of a thing; presents that and nothing more.

4. In all that goes to make up what we are accustomed to call a writer's language, the disparity between Milton and Brougham is equivalent to the difference between an organ and an ordinary bagpipe of the streets.

4a. Between the language of Milton and of Brougham there is as much difference as between an organ and a bagpipe.

5. It is not the mere possession of thought itself which serves to keep man a thing apart from the rest of animal creation, for the brutes enjoy this blessing also; but man is the only creature who thinks in terms of time beyond the present, and of matters that lie outside his immediate personal interests.

5a. Thought does not separate man from the brutes, for the brutes think: but man alone thinks beyond the moment and beyond himself.

Prolixity. Prolixity consists in the introduction of trivial or superfluous details. "The charge which some of our historians are most anxious to avoid," says Frederic Harrison, "is the charge of being 'readable,' of keeping to themselves any fact that they know." Like Van Amberg, in the old song, the prolix writer "will tell you all he knows." Prolixity is probably the deadliest form of wordiness. The long-winded story-teller, preacher, or after-dinner speaker who tries to leave nothing unsaid, is voted a bore.

The classic example of prolixity is the Nurse's account of her interview with Romeo, in *Romeo and Juliet.* This is the perfect model of how a story should not be told. To cite a less famous example, we may take a sentence or two

from the conversation of Mrs. Honour, Sophia Western's maid, in *Tom Jones*. Mrs. Honour is trying to impart to Sophia some very important information.

"O dear, ma'am," says she, "what doth your la'ship think? To be sure I am frightened out of my wits; and yet I thought it my duty to tell your la'ship, though perhaps it may make you angry, for we servants don't always know what will make our ladies angry; for, to be sure, everything is always laid to the charge of a servant. When our ladies are out of humor, to be sure we must be scolded; and to be sure I should not wonder if your la'ship should be out of humor; nay, it must surprise you certainly, aye, and shock you, too."

"Good Honour, let me know it without any longer preface," says Sophia.

Justifiable wordiness. But while we are striving for what Meredith calls "the pregnant brevity that pricks imagination," and endeavoring to avoid "the wide discursiveness which exhausts it," we should not lose sight of the fact that it is sometimes advantageous to use more words than the meaning strictly requires. When an idea may be made clearer by restating it in a fresh way, thus allowing the reader more time for its absorption or a new standpoint from which to view it, there can be no reasonable quarrel with the method:

The changes wrought by death are in themselves so sharp and final, and so terrible and melancholy in their consequences, that the thing stands alone in man's experience, and has no parallel upon earth.[1]

Nor can there be serious objection to the restatement of an idea if it fills out, or completes, the beauty of a sentence. In the following quotation from Stevenson the idea expressed in "the trumpets might sound by the hour and no one

[1]Stevenson, *Aes Triplex*.

would follow them into battle" is restated in "the blue peter might fly at the truck, but who would climb into a sea-going ship"; but it would be pedantry to object to this, for the restatement rounds out the sentence and adds to its suggestiveness:

> If we clung as devotedly as some philosophers pretend we do to the abstract idea of life, or were half as frightened as they make out we were, for the subversive accident that ends it all, the trumpets might sound by the hour and no one would follow them into battle—the blue peter might fly at the truck, but who would climb into a sea-going ship?[1]

Something must be allowed, even by the stiffest critics, to imaginative richness. We have, too, a prescriptive right to many tautological word-couplings: *ways and means, kith and kin, rags and tatters, null and void, sorts and conditions, bag and baggage, intents and purposes, lord and master, sum and substance, safe and sound, scot and lot,* and numerous others. A circumlocution is justified if it opens up a fresh point of view, detaches us from our conventional attitude, as does the following:

> It seems as if a great deal were attainable in a world where there are so many marriages and decisive battles, and where we all, at certain hours of the day, and with great gusto and dispatch, stow a portion of victuals finally and irretrievably into the bag which contains us.[2]

When Addison, instead of *fan,* says "that little modish weapon," we welcome the circumlocution for the sake of its witty suggestion—the drawing-room a battle-ground for ladies. And we enjoy the circumlocution used by an old professor at Harvard who, not wishing to call a colleague a

[1] *Aes Triplex.*
[2] Stevenson, *El Dorado.*

liar, said: "So and So has an unparalleled ability in presenting different aspects of the truth to different persons."

In sum, avoid wordiness; but when more words will serve the purpose better than fewer, use them. Only, make certain that some gain compensates the loss in brevity.

EXERCISES

(*a*) Make the following sentences less wordy, either by striking out words or by rewriting:

1. On the other hand, it should not be thought that a strong virile vocabulary is to be condemned when the occasion justifies it and gives the writer warrant.
2. It was even feared that the poor unfortunate man was permanently disabled for active life.
3. The following passage is taken from page 358; it refers to arrangements for the journey to Edinburgh after the wedding.
4. It is hard to see any similarity that exists between certain members of the rose family.
5. Northrup did everything he possibly could to afford Laetitia every assistance that was within his power.
6. Among the artists he had few friends and intimate acquaintances, but he read works on art, especially considering them as being valuable for the glimpses they gave him of the artist pursuing his artistic vocation.
7. Herodotus related in his inimitable way, for the benefit of later generations of men, that the goddess Fortune had so abundantly favored Polycrates, the then tyrant of ancient Samos, that his good friend Amasis, who was king of Egypt at the time that Polycrates ruled Samos, sent him word that to ward off and guard against the fate that men and women then believed was sure to follow in the wake of unbroken prosperity, it was incumbent upon him to make a sacrifice of whatever object he deemed to be of the most considerable value to him.
8. A public meeting of citizens was called to assemble because the public opinion of the inhabitants of the city was in a state of agitation and excitement.

9. I am under the impression that your peregrinations in this metropolis have not as yet been extensive, and that you might have some difficulty in penetrating the arcana of the Modern Babylon in the direction of the City Road. I shall be happy to call this evening and install you in a knowledge of the nearest way.

10. The impending retirement of the present head of Ipswich College, Miss Margaret Jones, is now announced. This brilliant and able woman has held the headship of the college since 1902, being herself an old Ipswich student of the early days of that institution, and first showing her quality by taking First Class Honors in the Moral Science Tripos in 1879. Apropos of this announcement, I encountered one of those odd coincidences that abound in life, and that I mention on this occasion just because I have met with so many people who are just now extra unhappy from a sense of painful fatality produced by the war. Events in their private life, happening just before the war, combining with the effects of the war, give them a miserable feeling of being under some malignant star just now, of some adverse fate guiding and overruling their fortunes. It is easily all merely casual coincidence, not any sort of Providential anger or destined working together of events for the production of misfortune. In the watches of the night I was reading a ten-year-old book of memoirs by a Dr. Kerr, and among others I found this anecdote: A German professor, visiting Cambridge, pooh-poohed the whole learning of England, adding, "Why, you have not even a word corresponding to the German 'gelehrter' "—that is, a person whose whole interest in life is his own special and personal learning. "Oh, yes, we have," said Professor Henry Sidgwick, with his inveterate and well-known stammer. "We call them p-p-prigs." Three hours exactly after I put down the book in which I read this anecdote, I opened my morning paper and found this selfsame anecdote, as told by Miss Jones to a journalist who was interviewing her, with the characteristic addition that "there were no prigs at Ipswich." Nothing turns on this very pretty coincidence—except the rather obvious lesson that coincidences, however odd or striking, often mean nothing at all.

(*b*) Reduce predication in the following sentences:

1. After we had walked for two hours we caught sight of our destination, which was a small village that was located on a hill.

2. The current, which was swift, bore him out of sight.

3. At a bend in the river stood a house that was old; it was long and low and its sides were covered with shingles.

4. We hurried, and arrived at the station, and saw the 6.10 just as it was getting under way.

5. On this the King called out an army, and marched against the earl, and went into Northumberland, and as soon as he came thither he seized almost all those who were the chief men of the earl's court, and he put them in confinement. And he besieged Tinmouth castle until he took it, and there he seized the man who was the earl's brother, and all who were with him: thence he proceeded till he came to Bambrough, and there he besieged the earl; and when the King found that he could not reduce him, he caused a castle to be built over against Bambrough, and called it in his speech Malveisin, which is in English, "the evil neighbor," and he garrisoned it strongly, and afterwards he departed southward. Then one night soon after the King had returned into the south, the earl went out of Bambrough toward Tinmouth; but those who were in the new castle were aware of the design he had, and they pursued and attacked him, and they wounded him, and afterwards took him prisoner; and some of his followers were slain, and some were taken alive.

(*c*) Can you justify the wordiness of any of the following sentences?

1. Custer did not believe that such a thing could be possible.

2. The one is the absolute antithesis of the other.

3. We may trick with the word of life in its dozen senses until we are weary of tricking; we may argue in terms of all the philosophies on earth, but one fact remains true throughout.

4. It is a well-known fact that an immense proportion of boat accidents would never happen if people held the sheet in their hands instead of making it fast; and yet, unless it be some martinet of a professional mariner or some landsman with shattered nerves, every one of God's creatures makes it fast.

5. There is no man who can answer that eternal question.

V. Variety

Effective repetition. A word or phrase should be repeated as often as necessary for clearness, brevity, or emphasis. When these ends can be served in no better way, good writers do not boggle over repetition.

For clearness, a word should be repeated whenever a substitute would be hazy or ambiguous. In the following sentence what does *it* stand for? Does the writer wish to tell us that the language tends to be reduced to an intuitive process, or that the speaking and writing of the language tend to become intuitive?

> The language itself is the means of communication in classroom work, and constant practice is given in speaking and writing, tending toward reducing it to an intuitive process.[1]

For brevity, as we have seen, it is better to repeat a word than to become involved in pointless circumlocutions. For emphasis, one may use repetition to keep prominently before the reader a particular object or idea, as in this sentence from Matthew Arnold's *The Study of Celtic Literature:*

> Balance, measure, and patience, these are the eternal conditions, even supposing the happiest temperament to start with, of high success; and balance, measure, and patience are just what the Celt has never had.

One may gain by repetition a hammering emphasis, as in this passage from Newman's *Idea of a University:*

> This [a quotation from Laurence Sterne] is eloquently written, but it contains, I consider, a mixture of truth and falsehood, which it will be my business to discriminate from each other. Far be it from me to deny the unapproachable grandeur and simplicity of

[1]Some phrase like *tending to reduce* would be pleasanter to the ear than *tending toward reducing.*

Holy Scripture; but I shall maintain that the classics are, as human composition, simple and majestic and natural, too. I grant that Scripture is concerned with things, but I will not grant that classical literature is simply concerned with words. I grant that human literature is often elaborate, but I will maintain that elaborate composition is not unknown to the writers of Scripture. I grant that human literature cannot easily be translated out of the particular language to which it belongs; but it is not at all the rule that Scripture can easily be translated either—and now I address myself to my task.

Ineffective repetition. Care should be taken, however, not to overwork repetition for emphasis. The writer cannot deal in such broad effects as the orator uses with success. The following paragraph from one of Webster's speeches, *The Character of Washington*, is undeniably effective oratory, but the iteration of "that name" is too rhetorical for good plain prose:

We are met to testify our regard for him whose name is intimately blended with whatever belongs most essentially to the prosperity, the liberty, the free institutions, and the renown of our country. That name was of power to rally a nation, in the hour of thick-thronging public disasters and calamities; that name shone, amid the storm of war, a beacon light to cheer and guide the country's friends; it flamed, too, like a meteor, to repel her foes. That name, in the days of peace, was a loadstone, attracting to itself a whole people's confidence, a whole people's love, and the whole world's respect. That name, descending with all time, spreading over the whole earth, and uttered in all the languages belonging to the tribes and races of men, will forever be pronounced with affectionate gratitude by every one in whose breast there shall arise an aspiration for human rights and human liberty.

Again, the very iteration that makes a word or phrase emphatic may, if careless, give emphasis to words that do not deserve it. Observe the stress put on unimportant words in the three sentences on the next page:

1. No doubt both of them will play on Saturday. No doubt the crowd will be one of the largest ever seen on Hobart Field.
2. It is to be noted as singular how ashamed the average man is to be thought to be interested in religion.
3. Such, as I have had occasion to say before in speaking of such analysis, such are the dry bones of such a story.

The effect of overworking a word or phrase may be the turning of the reader's attention from what is said to the manner of saying it, as a further example will show:

Jonson's relation to the trends of English literature at the end of the sixteenth century is the primary problem of this study, though at the same time I have attempted to trace the *trends* in his work as far back as they are discernible. The general point seems fairly clear that Jonson actually studied English literature and used the work of predecessors according to the Renaissance formulae for imitation somewhat as he imitated Latin literature, but less closely of course. Assuredly he was observant of the TRENDS and conventions in English literature and readily utilized its types so far as they were suitable for comedy. It is my hope that I have presented evidence to throw light on the relation of Jonson to his fellows and on the significance of literary T R E N D S for his work.[1]

It is not advisable, as a rule, to use a word in two or more different senses within a single sentence, or in neighboring sentences, unless a pun is intended:

Some mention of wings had been made in the text, whereupon Mr. Lowell observed that he had always had a liking for wings: he had lately observed that some were being added to the ugliest house in Cambridge, and he cherished hopes that they might fly away with it.[2]

But in serious writing there is a double objection to this kind of repetition: in the first place, it is likely to make the

[1]The italics and capitals do not appear in the original, of course; they are here intended to represent the increasing stress given the word.
[2]Barrett Wendell, *Stelligeri and Other Essays*.

word unduly prominent; in the second place, it is likely to cause a temporary confusion in the reader's mind while he is adjusting the old word to its new meaning. It would be better, for instance, in the first of the following examples to write "The purpose," or "The aim of a definition," etc., instead of "The object"; in the second, to write "A good device" instead of "A good practice":

1. The object of a definition is to enable anyone to decide what objects are and what are not designated by a term.
2. A good practice in it [*Twelfth Night*] to make the steward believe his lady . . . was in love with him . . . prescribing his gesture in smiling, his apparel, etc., and then when he came to practice, making him believe they took him to be mad.

The final count against unskilful repetition is that it is disagreeable to the ear. Anyone who notices words at all will probably find his attention unpleasantly fixed for an instant on the repetition of *rock* in these sentences:

1. The mountain trembled to its very base, and the rock rocked.
2. Then Kaa would give way limply, and Mowgli, with both quick moving feet, would try to cramp the purchase of that huge tail as it flung backward feeling for a rock or a stump. They would rock to and fro. . . .

Favorite words. In the interests of variety, too, we should keep a lookout for our favorite words. Over-indulgence in favorite words is a habit that soon annoys a reader. Samuel Butler states the case against this habit:

I daresay she writes very well, but she has fallen under the dominion of the words *hope*, *think*, *feel*, *try*, *bright*, and *little*, and can hardly write a page without introducing all these words and some of them more than once. All this has the effect of making her style monotonous.[1]

[1] *The Way of All Flesh.*

EXERCISES

1. Rewrite the following paragraphs, avoiding needless or unpleasant repetition:

(*a*) It is the Wells of *Kipps* and *The History of Mr. Polly*, the Wells of infinite good humor, the Wells that at once puts the reader into the best of humor, that greets one in *Bealby*. The sub-title is *A Holiday;* a holiday for Bealby is probably what Mr. Wells meant, but a holiday for Mr. Wells it is, too, a joyous holiday excursion into the realms of humor, and a holiday it is likewise for the reader. The reader cannot help but feel that in writing *Bealby* Mr. Wells had as joyous a time as the reader himself is sure to have.

Bealby is the name of a boy, an irresistible boy, a boy in whose heart there burns the fire of ambition, but a boy who is doomed to service as a steward's assistant in a big country house. But the desire of this boy Bealby to accomplish something in the world, "to do something big," will not be quenched; and Bealby runs away from perils and troubles that beset him on every side, so Bealby thinks, for a grand, glorious holiday, only to plunge himself at once into a series of perils and troubles that are far more terrible than the perils and troubles from which Bealby ran away.

(*b*) *Mr. Britling Sees It Through* is an interesting book written in an interesting way. Mr. Britling's opinions were very interesting to me, and he certainly mentions many interesting facts about the way the war was carried on by the English. His son Hugh was a fine fellow and certainly knew how to write interesting letters from the trenches. The story certainly gave me an interesting idea of how the English felt about many things while the war was being carried on.

2. Point out the means whereby Macaulay has avoided unpleasant repetition in the following paragraph:

Rajah Sahib determined to storm the fort. The day was well suited to a bold military enterprise. It was the great Mahommedan festival which is sacred to the memory of Hosein, the son of Ali. The history of Islam contains nothing more touching than the event which gave rise to that solemnity. The mournful legend relates how the chief of the Fatimites,

when all his brave followers had perished round him, drank his latest draft of water, and uttered his latest prayer; how the assassins carried his head in triumph; how the tyrant smote the lifeless lips with his staff; and how a few old men recollected with tears that they had seen those lips pressed to the lips of the Prophet of God. After the lapse of near twelve centuries, the recurrence of this solemn season excites the fiercest and saddest emotions in the bosoms of the devout Moslem of India. They work themselves up to such agonies of rage and lamentation that some, it is said, have given up the ghost from the mere effect of mental excitement. They believe that whoever, during this festival, falls in arms against the infidels, atones by his death for all the sins of his life, and passes at once to the garden of the Houris. It was at this time that Rajah Sahib determined to assault Arcot. Stimulating drugs were employed to aid the effect of religious zeal; and the besiegers, drunk with enthusiasm, drunk with bhang, rushed furiously to the attack.

3. Find one or more instances of effective repetition in the preceding paragraph.

4. Read fifteen or twenty pages of your own writing to discover your favorite words and expressions. Make a list of these for discussion in class.

VI. Figures of Speech

The value of figures of speech. Language, as we have seen, is full of buried figures of speech; to the philologist the most matter-of-fact prose is honeycombed with them. But those figures with which we are now concerned are such as writer and reader are conscious of, such as are used to illuminate, enliven, or beautify. The finest tropes throw light and give aesthetic pleasure; are at once aids to understanding, and ornaments. On the following page are figures which vivify the thought, shed luster upon it, make it incandescent:

1. It was through the Normans that the English mind and fancy, hitherto provincial and uncouth, were first infused with the lightness, grace, and self-confidence of Romance literature. They seemed to have opened a window to the southward in that solid and somewhat somber insular character, and it was a painted window all aglow with the figures of tradition and poetry.[1]

2. At the gates of the forest, the surprised man of the world is forced to leave his city estimates of great and small, wise and foolish. The knapsack of custom falls off his back with the first step he makes into these precincts.[2]

3. The finest qualities of our nature, like the bloom on fruits, can be preserved only by the most delicate handling.[3]

The power of a figure on a larger scale is shown by a quotation from Emerson's *Compensation:*

All infractions of love and equity in our social relations are speedily punished. They are punished by Fear. Whilst I stand in simple relations to my fellow-man, I have no displeasure in meeting him. We meet as water meets water, or as two currents of air mix, with perfect diffusion and interpenetration of nature. But as soon as there is any departure from simplicity and attempt at halfness, or good for me that is not good for him, my neighbor feels the wrong; he shrinks from me as far as I have shrunk from him; his eyes no longer seek mine; there is war between us; there is hate in him and fear in me.

All the old abuses in society, the great and universal and the petty and particular, all unjust accumulations of property and power, are avenged in the same manner. Fear is an instructor of great sagacity and the herald of all revolutions. One thing he always teaches, that there is rottenness where he appears. He is a carrion crow, and though you see not well what he hovers for, there is death somewhere. Our property is timid, our laws are timid, our cultivated classes are timid. Fear for ages has boded and mowed and gibbered over government and property. That obscene bird is not there for nothing. He indicates great wrongs which must be revised.

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[1]Lowell, *Chaucer.*
[2]Emerson, *Nature.*
[3]Thoreau, *Walden.*

Figures should arise naturally and not be deliberately sought for. They are best when natural and spontaneous; and they are natural and spontaneous when they occur to a writer because his subject has stirred his imagination or his feelings. To set to work consciously to decorate a piece of writing with figures is only to ape the language of imagination or feeling—an affectation and mimicry that discerning readers are quick to detect and ridicule. The deliberate, cold-blooded dragging in of figures produced by misapplied mental ingenuity is responsible for some of the dreariest pages ever written. If our choice lies between artificial figures and no figures at all, let us choose to go without. Some of the finest prose, and poetry, too, is quite literal in its language.

Kinds of figures. As every deviation from literal speech is, strictly speaking, a figure, the term necessarily has many subdivisions. But of the many classes of figures that have been listed it will be profitable for us to consider only the more important:

Hyperbole. Hyperbole is obvious exaggeration, not intended to be taken literally. Macbeth's answer to his own question about the blood on his hands is an illustration:

> Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood
> Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
> The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
> Making the green one red.

The truest justification for hyperbole is strong feeling; it falls most appropriately from the lips of men who are greatly moved and who therefore have lost for a time their sense of proportion. Occasionally it may serve as a means of exceptional emphasis in otherwise sober prose, but if it is not handled with caution, it easily degenerates into mere extravagance or bombast.

Personification. Personification is conceiving inanimate objects or abstractions as having life and a capacity for human thoughts and feelings.

> . . . Jocund day
> Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.
>
> Fly, envious Time, till thou run out thy race.

When personification has a vivid conception behind it, as it has in the passage from *Compensation* quoted on page 517, it is one of the most powerful of figures. But when personification has no more vitality than a capital letter and a personal pronoun can give, it is one of the weakest and flattest. In typical contemporary prose personification is but little used; for the most elaborate use of it in prose, one would naturally turn to the higher "flights" of old-fashioned oratory.

Irony. Irony consists in making statements which really mean something quite contrary to what is literally expressed. Mark Tapley, in *Martin Chuzzlewit,* will furnish us an example:

> "Ah! He'd bought land," said Mark, shaking his head, "and paid for it too. Every sort of nateral advantage was connected with it, the agents said; and there certainly was *one,* quite unlimited. No end to the water!"
>
> "It's a thing he couldn't have done without, I suppose," observed Martin, peevishly.
>
> "Certainly not, sir. There it was, any way; always turned on, and no water-rate. Independent of three or four slimy old rivers close by, it varied on the farm from four to six foot deep in the dry season."

Irony adds spice to humorous writing. In serious writing, especially in attacks upon men or measures, it may be extremely telling. In the hands of a Swift irony is perhaps

the most powerful stylistic weapon. It must be employed with discretion, though. In the first place, it may be misunderstood, particularly if it is subtle or delicate; in which case it may recoil upon the user, his readers crediting him with opinions not his. In the second place, it is apt to wound more deeply those whom it hits than is straightforward criticism or disagreement. The implications of irony are often more bitter than the writer himself is aware of, bitterer than the feelings which prompted him when he wrote. And in the third place, the number of people who relish irony of any length, who can read with pleasure such ironic masterpieces, say, as Fielding's *Jonathan Wild the Great* and Thackeray's *Barry Lyndon,* is comparatively small.

Figures of association. Figures of association arise when a part is made to stand for a whole, an individual for the class to which it belongs, an attribute for the object to which it is applied; as when we say "a sail" and mean "a ship," or "a Daniel" and mean "a just judge," or "the youth and beauty of the town" and mean "the young and beautiful persons of the town." This kind of association is known technically as *synecdoche.* Another figure of association, known as *metonymy,* consists in designating a thing by something else which is closely related to it, as its cause, its effect, its container, and so on. Familiar examples are: "gray hairs" for "old age," "the bottle" for "strong drink," "the kettle boils" for "the water in the kettle boils" and "the pulpit" for "the clergy." Figures of association have the merit of being concrete, and of presenting striking or pictorial aspects of an object or of something connected with it.

Simile and metaphor. A simile is a comparison of things essentially unlike in most particulars. If two objects belonging to the same class are compared, the comparison is literal and would not properly be classed as simile. A

metaphor is a condensed and heightened simile in which the comparison is implied, not stated. In a simile we say one thing is *like* something else; in a metaphor we say one thing *is* something else.

Literal Comparison: Slater's beard is just the color of a fox's hair.
Simile: Slater is as sly as a fox.
Metaphor: Slater is a sly fox.

These figures appear more frequently in contemporary prose than all the others taken together; they offer the writer more room for the exercise of originality and observation, and are the most generally useful figures: hence they should be given most attention.

As a rule, a simile or a metaphor should not be long-drawn-out. Brevity is commonly most desirable. Over-elaborated figurative comparison may easily seem artificial —too self-conscious to be agreeable. The deft artist may give himself fuller scope than is wise for the beginner; Meredith, in the following passage, in which the notion of embarking is made to furnish two distinct and playful images, succeeds where we should fail:

She had brought herself to think she ought to sacrifice herself to Tinman, and her evasions with Herbert, manifested in tricks of coldness alternating with tones of regret, ended, as they had commenced, in a mysterious half-sullenness. She had hardly a word to say. Let me step in . . . to observe that she had at the moment no pointed intention of marrying Tinman. To her mind the circumstances compelled her to embark on the idea of doing so, and she saw the extremity in an extreme distance, as those who are taking voyages may see death by drowning. Still, she had embarked.

"At all events, I have your word for it that you don't dislike me?" said Herbert.

"Oh! no," she sighed. She liked him as emigrants the land they are leaving.[1]

[1] *The House on the Beach.*

He does wisely to stop there; the figure has not become strained or too ingenious, but preserves spontaneousness. In contrast, how heavy-handed is the elaboration of the military figure in the following:

But our estimate of John Marston's rank or regiment in the noble army of contemporary poets will not be in any way affected by acceptance or rejection of any apocryphal addition to the canon of his writings. For better and for worse, the orthodox and undisputed roll of them will suffice to decide that question beyond all chance of intelligent or rational dispute. His rank is high in his own regiment; and the colonel of that regiment is Ben Jonson. At first sight he may seem rather to belong to that brighter and more famous one which has Webster among its captains, Dekker among its lieutenants, Heywood among its privates, and Shakespeare at its head. Nor did he by any means follow the banner of Jonson with such automatic fidelity as that imperious martinet of genius was wont to exact from those who came to be "sealed of the tribe of Ben." A rigid critic—a critic who should push rigidity to the verge of injustice—might say that he was one of those recruits in literature whose misfortune it is to fall between two stools—to halt between two courses. It is certain that he never thoroughly mastered the cavalry drill of Shakespeare or the infantry drill of Jonson.

The figure grows tedious. It is neither illuminating nor beautiful. The beginner will do well to keep his similes and metaphors brief and simple.

Another requirement is hinted at in a statement of Emerson's: "Accuracy is essential to beauty." And accuracy in figurative comparison requires some genuine resemblance, though it last but for a momentary apprehension. In a good figure the resemblance is clear enough, also, to be seen at once. One can by no means feel immediately certain of the resemblance in the following:

The moon dropped from behind a cloud on to the still floor of the sky and shone steadily down on Hampton Roads.

The next example shows how far from truth a writer may go in the quest for ornament:

> This isle
> Set in the glassy ocean's azure swoon . . .

The accuracy essential to beauty is lacking in the "mixed metaphor." The parts of a mixed metaphor are not in logical agreement with one another, and consequently the mental image derived from them is confused:

> If we were permitted to choose for ourselves certain glimpses into the life of the past, few of those who bathe at the fount of letters but would ask for a plunge into the high-tide of Weimar.

It is ironical that this should have appeared in a biography of Thackeray. In a sentence or two in *Yellowplush Papers* he says all that needs to be said here about mixed figures. After quoting these lines,

> And see him princeliest of the lion tribe,
> Whose swords and coronals gleam around the throne,
> The guardian stars of the imperial isle,

from Bulwer Lytton's *Sea Captain,* he comments as follows:

> Look at the neat grammaticle twist of Lady Arundel's spitch, too, who, in the course of three lines, has made her son a prince, a lion, with a sword and coronal, and a star. Why jumble and sheak up metafors in this way? Barnet, one simily is quite enuff in the best of sentenses (and I preshum I needn't tell you that it's as well to have it *like,* when you are about it). Take my advise, honrabble sir—listen to a humble footmin: it's genrally best . . . to understand puffickly what you mean yourself, and to igspress your meaning clearly afterwoods.

"We cannot approach beauty," says Emerson in his essay on *Love.* "Its nature is . . . hovering and evanescent.

Herein it resembles the most excellent things, which all have this rainbow character, defying all attempts at appropriation and use." The force of this is felt by one who has been searching for the secret of beauty among the externals or ornaments of style such as similes and metaphors. Figures do not constitute beauty in literature. They contribute their little share, and that is all. So do some other things, such as an observance of the principles of composition, the choice of the right words for the right ideas, rhythm, euphony, and the clear and varied construction of sentences. Clearness, indeed, is essential to beauty in literature, and so are harmony and proportion. But a letter complaining that a consignment of hardware had arrived in bad condition might show all these qualities, and still not be beautiful. We might say of such a letter that it is "good," or "well written," or "to the point," but we should be ridiculous if we called it beautiful. When the idea to be expressed has in itself elements of beauty, and is expressed through a spirit enkindled with those elements, then only are the conditions favorable for the production of beauty in literature. But most of us will never try to create beauty; for us the vital point is that urged by Yellowplush—first understand what we mean, then say it clearly.

EXERCISES

(*a*) Discuss the following figures of speech, distinguishing the effective from the ineffective and giving the reasons for your opinions:

1. De Musset, though a drunkard, with his mind always derelict in the sea of his imagination, yet had the sacred fire.
2. It should ever be kept in our recollection, that a graceful carriage—a noble bearing, and a generous disposition to sit with ease and grace—must be enthroned in the mind's eye on every virtuous sentiment.

3. "Then, as you are not engaged, and don't hate me, I have a chance?" he said, in the semi-wailful interrogative of an organ making a mere windy conclusion.

4. As the postmaster turned away after his soliloquy, night was settling over the town like a black hen over her nest.

5. They listened with parted lips, the night wind blowing through Simon Burden's few teeth as through the ruins of Stonehenge.

6. They went to the door, Mrs. Manston shivering; but less from the cold than from the dreariness of her emotion. Neglect is the coldest of winter winds.

7. But the qualities that make Milton a poor boon-companion are precisely those which combine to raise his style to an unexampled loftiness, a dignity that bears itself easily in society greater than human. To attain to this height it was needful that there should be no aimless expatiation of the intellect, no facile diffusion of the sympathies over the wide field of human activity and human character. All the strength of mind and heart and will that was in Milton went into the process of raising himself. He is like some giant palm-tree; the foliage that sprang from it as it grew has long since withered, the stem rises gaunt and bare; but high up above, outlined against the sky, is a crown of perennial verdure.

8. There are faces that call your attention by a curious want of definiteness in their whole respect, as, walking in a mist, you peer attentively at a vague shape which, after all, may be nothing more curious or strange than a signpost.

9. The Royal Nautical Sportsman bridled, shied, answered the question, and then breasted once more into the swelling tide of his subject.

10. But there are times when the poet's impulse controls her, quiets her sharp wits, and casts into the atmosphere of her imagination the subdued magic of poetry.

11. Whatever defects the poem may have, it is limpid and pellucid as a brook. Here and there the water runs thin and shallow, but—as with the brook—it is not necessarily the less beautiful for that. Its bed is, for the most part, bright with exquisitely colored pebbles, and occasionally with really precious stones.

12. In these works creep out his likes and dislikes, sparks of his genius and shadows of his weakness.

13. He was strolling leisurely across the velvet lawn, gazing idly about him at the snow-capped peaks.

14. It was Lincoln's chief source of strength, indeed, that he had a homely way with him, that he could reduce complex problems to the simple terms of popular theory and emotion, that he did not ask little fishes to think and act like whales.

15. His pride burst into flame under these strokes and lashes of contempt.

16. The very short winter afternoon had worn away, and before they knew, the winter moon was walking the untroubled sea.

17. The watercourse lifted up its voice in the silence, and talked foolishly to the rocks.

18. I waited and waited, and the days, as they elapsed, took something from my consternation. A very few of them, in fact, passing . . . without fresh incident, sufficed to give to grievous fancies and even to odious memories a kind of brush of the sponge.

19. Soon after dark the few liberty-men and the new hands began to arrive in boats rowed by white-clad Asiatics, who clamored fiercely for payment before coming alongside the gangway ladder. The feverish and shrill babble of Eastern language struggled against the masterful tones of tipsy seamen, who argued against brazen claims and dishonest hopes by profane shouts. The resplendent and bestarred peace of the East was torn into squalid tatters by howls of rage and shrieks of lament raised over sums ranging from five annas to half a rupee.

20. A certain lifting in her voice had knocked directly at the door of my own tears.

21. Now he sat on the low porch and looked away toward the burnished water in the distance, and watched the sun drop lower and finally drown itself in the burnished gold.

22. And thus ancient outdoor crafts and occupations, whether Mr. Hardy wields the shepherd's crook or Count Tolstoi swings the scythe, lift romance into a near neighborhood with epic. These ancient things have on them the dew of man's morning: they lie near, not so much to us, the semi-artificial flowerets, as to the trunk and aboriginal tap-root of the race.

23. Silhouettes of moving men appeared for a moment, very black, without relief, like figures cut out of sheet tin.

24. An aide, you know, is merely a dot on the blotting paper, a high light in the picture, and his chief function is to efface himself.

25. High overhead ridges of many-peaked cloud—the gleaming, wandering Alps of the blue ether; outstretched far below, the warming bosom of the earth, throbbing with the hope of maternity. Two spirits abroad in the air, encountering each other and passing into one: the spirit of scentless spring left by melting snows and the spirit of scented summer born with the earliest buds.

26. Each truth that a writer acquires is a lantern which he turns full on what facts and thoughts lay already in his mind, and behold, all the mats and rubbish which had littered his garret become precious. Every trivial fact in his private biography becomes an illustration of this new principle, revisists the day, and delights all men by its piquancy and new charm. Men say, Where did he get this? and think there was something divine in his life. But no; they have myriads of facts just as good, would they only get a lamp to ransack their attics withal.

(*b*) Criticize the following comparison, reducing wordiness wherever possible:

Literature, like its most excellent phase, poetry, has never been satisfactorily defined. In essence it is too subtle, too elusive, too vital, to be confined within the limits of phrase. Yet everybody vaguely knows what it is. Everybody knows that human life, in its endless, commonplace, unfathomable complexity, impresses human beings in ways which vary not only with individuals, but with the generations and the nations. Somewhere in the oldest English writings there is an allegory which has never faded. Of a night, it tells us, a little group was gathered about the fireside in a hall where the flicker of flame cast light on some and threw others into shadow, but none into shadow so deep as the darkness without. And into the window from the midst of the night flew a swallow lured by the light; but unable by reason of his wildness to linger among men, he sped across the hall and so out again into the dark, and was seen no more. To this day, as much as when the old poet saw or fancied it, the swallow's flight remains an image of earthly life. From whence, we know not, we come

into the wavering light and gusty warmth of this world; but here the law of our being forbids that we remain. A little we may see, fancying that we understand—the hall, the lords and the servants, the chimney and the feast; more we may feel—the light and warmth, the safety and the danger, the hope and the dread. Then we must forth again, into the voiceless, unseen eternities. But the fleeting moments of life, like the swallow's flight once more, are not quite voiceless; as surely as he may twitter in the ears of men, so men themselves may give sign to one another of what they think they know, and of what they know they feel. More, too; men have learned to record these signs, so that long after they are departed, others may guess what their life meant. These records are often set forth in terms which may be used only by those of rarely special gift and training—the terms of architecture and sculpture, of painting and music; but oftener and more freely they are phrased in the terms which all men learn somehow to use—the terms of language. Some of these records, and most, are of so little moment that they are soon neglected and forgotten; others, like the fancied story of the swallow, linger through the ages. It is to these that we give the name of literature. Literature is the lasting expression in words of the meaning of life.

(*c*) Bring to class an example of each of the following figures: hyperbole, personification, irony, synecdoche, metonymy, simile, metaphor.

GENERAL EXERCISE

Comment on the use of words in the following extracts, pointing out words or phrases that are especially apt, suggestive, forceful, or novel, and improving the choice of words whenever it seems affected, strained, out of harmony with context or subject-matter, inaccurate, or too technical. Assume that all the extracts are from writings intended for the general reading public:

1. Since all of the lines are standard, it can be readily seen why that for months we have been in the market, purchasing ideal lots of merchandise for ready cash, always at bed-rock prices.

2. What! shall it be within benefit of clergy to delay the king's message on the highroad—to interrupt the great respira-

tions, ebb and flood, systole and diastole, of the national intercourse—to endanger the safety of tidings running day and night between all nations and languages?

3. We choose all our patterns and models with punctilious care and aim to preserve a treasured exclusiveness, while barring vapid eccentricities [tailor's advertisement].

4. And Mrs. Clowes, all dithering like a jelly, heard shots.

5. The philosophy which is so important in each of us is not a technical matter; it is our more or less dumb sense of what life honestly and deeply means. It is only partly got from books; it is our individual way of just seeing and feeling the total push and pressure of the cosmos.

6. Assume, for the nonce, that the Stevenson whom we know through his work is strangely compounded of these elements; a thesis which it is my business to exemplify in the pages that follow: assume, I say, that he had a certain scholarship, and loved preaching, and romance, and the infinite variety of the creature; that with a keen vision and a faculty of ingenious invention he joined incomparable workmanship; assume all this, and I must still remark two main distinctions betwixt Stevenson and his immediate forebears.

7. The windows to the street were mullioned into narrow lights, and only commanded a view of the opposite houses; hence, perhaps, it arose that the best and most luxurious private sitting-room that the inn could afford overlooked the nether parts of the establishment, where beyond the yard were to be seen gardens and orchards, now bossed, nay incrusted, with scarlet and gold fruit.

8. The bridegroom was rather over eighteen, and the lady was some seven years his senior.

9. The play has passages of rare power, of Marlowe-like passion, of beauty . . . far beyond others that have been over-praised and reproduced elaborately in Dodsley's *Collection*, original and subsequent. I am glad that in the present edition it will long-last be accessible to students at home, in America, Germany, and Italy.

10. As our world advances through history toward its present epoch, it becomes more specialist, less democratic, and folklore turns gradually into fiction.

11. One of these, for a moment, tempted me with such singular intensity that, to withstand it, I must have gripped my

little girl with a spasm that, wonderfully, she submitted to without a cry or a sign of fright.

12. A child with a piece of chalk and a board may show more genius than a man with years of studio at his back; but that does not dispense the child from learning to draw.

13. It faired as the night went on, and the moon came out of the clouds.

14. Myself have heard Walt Whitman quoted by workmen in Victoria Park in London, passages respecting the dignity of the common man.

15. After long, sweet sleep under the dry stars.

16. Mahbub Ali, used to taking all sorts of gusty chances, pressed him into the service on the spot.

17. He could hear the sticky pull of the slow-rending oilcloth.

18. From the thick grass at the foot of the bush there came a low hiss—a horrid, cold sound.

19. The English sailor cannot marry as profusely as he used to do.

20. In the perfect precision of his collar, his boots, his dress, his figure; in the way from time to time he cleared his throat, in the strange yellow driedness of his face between his carefully brushed whiskers, in the immobility of his white hands on his cane, he gave the impression of a man sucked dry by a system.

21. He bridled ecclesiastically.

22. They were so excessively dead!

23. He runs puffily.

24. The train halted at Cinnabar station, and we were decanted, a howling crowd of us, into stages, variously horsed.

25. While the former for the most part accepted only a general influence from Jonson's best characteristics, the latter sought to follow him more closely and less wisely, often even in his faults of pedantry, caricature, and didacticism.

26. The Colosseum is about five hundred eighty-four feet long from out to out.

27. Knowledge of the nature and development of speech has made a good deal of progress during the more than century which had gone by since Swift addressed his letter to Lord Oxford.

28. As a rule, indeed, grown-up people are fairly correct on matters of fact; it is in the higher gift of imagination that they are so sadly to seek.

29. Full surely this immovable stone man would not release

her. This petrifaction of egoism would from amazedly to austerely refuse the petition.

30. Or who can avert his eyes from the engaging, half-artful, half-artless ways of school-girls who go into the country shops to buy a skein of silk or a sheet of paper, and talk half an hour about nothing with the broad-faced, good-natured shop-boy. In the village they are a perfect equality, which love delights in, and without any coquetry the happy, affectionate nature of woman flows out in this pretty gossip. The girls may have little beauty, yet plainly do they establish between them and the good boy the most agreeable, confiding relations; what with their fun and their earnest, about Edgar and Jonas and Almira, and who was invited to the party, and who danced at the dancing-school, and when the singing-school would begin, and other nothings concerning which the parties cooed.

31. The Greek sculpture is all melted away, as if it had been statues of ice; here and there a solitary figure or fragment remaining, as we see flecks and scraps of snow left in cold dells and mountain clefts in June and July.

32. You admire this tower of granite, weathering the hurts of so many ages. Yet a little waving hand built this huge wall.

33. Who that sees the meanness of our politics but inly congratulates Washington that he is long already wrapped in his shroud, and forever safe; that he was laid sweet in his grave, the hope of humanity not yet subjugated in him?

34. More freedom exists for culture. It will not now run against an ax at the first step out of the beaten track of opinion. But who so is heroic will always find crises to try his edge.

35. The intellectual life may be kept clean and healthful if man will live the life of nature and not import into his mind difficulties which are none of his. No man need be perplexed in his speculations. Let him do and say what strictly belongs to him, and though very ignorant of books, his nature shall not yield him any intellectual obstructions and doubts. Our young people are diseased with the theological problems of original sin, origin of evil, predestination, and the like. These never presented a practical difficulty to any man—never darkened across any man's road who did not go out of his way to seek them. These are the soul's mumps and measles and whooping-coughs.

36. It is easy enough for a firm man who knows the world

to brook the rage of the cultivated classes. Their rage is decorous and prudent, for they are timid, as being very vulnerable themselves. But when to their feminine rage the indignation of the people is added, when the unintelligent brute force that lies at the bottom of society is made to growl and mow, it needs the habit of magnanimity and religion to treat it godlike as a trifle of no concernment.

37. A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines.

38. We have crept out of our close and crowded houses into the night and morning, and we see what majestic beauties daily wrap us in their bosom. How willingly we would escape the barriers which render them comparatively impotent, escape the sophistication and second thought, and suffer nature to entrance us. The tempered light of the woods is like a perpetual morning, and is stimulating and heroic. The anciently-reported spells of these places creep on us. The stems of pines, hemlocks, and oaks almost gleam like iron on the excited eye. The incommunicable trees begin to persuade us to live with them, and quit our life of solemn trifles.

39. If our young men miscarry in their first enterprises they lose all heart. If the young merchant fails, men say he is ruined. If the finest genius studies at one of our colleges and is not installed in an office within one year afterwards in the cities or suburbs of Boston or New York, it seems to his friends and to himself that he is right in being disheartened and in complaining the rest of his life. A sturdy lad from New Hampshire or Vermont, who in turn tries all the professions, who teams it, farms it, peddles, keeps a school, preaches, edits a newspaper, goes to Congress, buys a township, and so forth, in successive years, always like a cat falls on his feet, is worth a hundred of these city dolls.

40. The dry yawn of water crawling over thirsty sand.

41. The good-natured crowd swept the police to one side, and fifty men divested his carriage of its prancing steeds.

42. Sadly her gaze wandered northward to the purple-plaintive hills.

43. It will soon be time now for vows to be made that hair on individual heads shall not be cut nor facial hirsute ornamentation lessened until so-and-so is elected President.

44. Clubs had taken possession of the feminine element in the school.

APPENDICES

A. CORRECT FORM

B. SPECIMENS

REFERENCES FOR THEME CORRECTING

In correcting papers, instructors may refer students to particular portions of the handbook material by means of the following numbers, which appear in black-face type on the pages indicated. (A circle drawn around a number on a theme makes it more distinctive.) In this list a few of the more important subheads are given.

1. Manuscript, p. 535
2. The period, p. 538
3. The question mark, p. 538
4. The exclamation point, p. 539
5. The comma, p. 539
  2. After a subordinate clause preceding a main clause
  3. To set off a non-restrictive clause or phrase
  5. Before *but, yet, though, while, only,* etc., used to add an independent clause to a sentence.
  6. Before *as, for, since* when they add a reason
  7. Before *and so* and *so that* introducing a result
  8. To set off quotations
  11. To set off appositives

6. The semicolon, p. 543
  1. Between independent clauses not joined by a coördinating conjunction
  2. Between groups of details or of associated words if one of the groups contains a comma

7. The colon, p. 543
8. The dash, p. 544
9. Parenthesis marks, p. 545
10. Quotation marks, p. 546
11. Brackets, p. 548
12. Ellipses, p. 548
13. Capitals, p. 552
14. Italics, p. 554
15. "Period fault," p. 556
16. "Comma blunder," p. 557
  1. Using commas in place of semicolons. See under **6.** The semicolon

17. Restrictive and non-restrictive clauses, p. 558
18. Collective nouns, p. 558
19. Possessive case, p. 559
20. Pronouns, number of, p. 560
21. Pronouns, gender of, p. 560
22. Pronouns, case of, p. 561
23. Verbs, number of, p, 562
24. Verbs, tenses of, p. 565
25. *Shall* and *will,* p. 567
26. Words, omissions of, p, 569
27. Participles and gerunds, p. 570
28. Spelling, p. 593

APPENDIX A

CORRECT FORM

1. I. Preparation of Manuscript

1. The aim. In preparing a manuscript try by every means in your power to make it neat and legible. A neat page, free from blots and noticeable erasures, makes a good impression. A legible manuscript enables a reader to devote his attention to what you have to say and to your manner of saying it. Even an experienced instructor finds it almost impossible to give fair and helpful criticism on the style or structure of a composition if his attention is distracted by frequent attempts to decipher poor handwriting.

2. Materials. Unless otherwise instructed, use paper of the size known as "standard typewriter," 8½ x 11 inches. The paper should take ink readily without spreading it, but should not have a highly glazed or shiny surface. In texture it should be firm enough to permit easy handling. Use a good pen (lead pencil will not do) and rich black or blue-black ink. Watery or faded ink should be discarded. If you use a typewriter, see that the ribbon is fresh enough to leave a clear and distinct impression on the paper.

3. Titles. Capitalize the first word of a title and all important words. Unless they come first in the title, prepositions, articles, conjunctions, and auxiliary verbs are usually not capitalized.

4. Spacing. Leave about an inch of space between the title and the top of the page and somewhat less between the title and the body of the text. Center the title horizontally so that the margins at either end are approximately equal. Leave a margin an inch to an inch and a half in width at the left of

the paper. Do not crowd words close to the right-hand edge of the paper nor to the bottom. A margin of at least half an inch at the right and the bottom makes a better looking manuscript. Between words and after a colon or semicolon leave a space about equal to that occupied by the letter "m." Between sentences, double this space. Do not leave more space than this at the end of a sentence unless the sentence is the last one in a paragraph.

5. Indention. Indent paragraphs sufficiently to strike the eye at once—half an inch, say, if the writing is small, an inch if the writing is large.

6. Paging. Write on one side of the paper only. Number the pages consecutively at the top of the paper, preferably in the right-hand corner and in arabic numerals. See that the pages are arranged in the proper order before you submit the manuscript to a reader.

7. Handwriting. In general, a plain vertical style of handwriting is easiest to read. Avoid long loops and flourishes, and keep the lines far enough apart so that the letters of one line never touch any of those above or below. Form individual letters distinctly: do not force a reader to guess whether you have written *a* or *o*, *n* or *u*, *h* or *li*, *mi* or *nu*. The cross of a *t* should actually cross the vertical part of the letter; the dot of an *i* or *j* should stand directly above. Take extra pains to write proper names clearly.

8. Alterations. To add a word or a phrase, write it above the line it belongs in and mark the exact point of insertion with a caret (∧). Additions over a line in length may be made by recopying a portion of the manuscript or by putting the addition on a separate sheet marked with a caption such as "Insert on page —." A caret should mark the point of insertion on the original page, and a marginal note should call attention to the fact that something is to be added. This method should be resorted to only under stress of circumstances. To strike

out a word, draw a horizontal line through it; brackets or parentheses should never be used for this purpose, as they do not signify omission. A new paragraph may be made by putting the sign of the paragraph (¶) at the point where the division occurs. Two paragraphs may be united by running a line from the end of one to the beginning of the other. Parts of a word inadvertently separated may be joined together thus: in⁀voice. Two words run together by mistake may be separated by drawing a vertical line between them.

II. Marks Used in Correcting Compositions

The following abbreviations and signs are commonly used by instructors in correcting and criticizing students' written work:

A = ambiguous.
Cap. = use a capital letter.
Ch. = choose a better word.
Co. = make more coherent.
Cst. = sentence faulty in construction.
E = lacks emphasis
F = doubtful or ineffective figure of speech.
Gr. = mistake in grammar.
I = word improperly used.
K = awkward.
l.c. = use a small letter in place of a capital.
O = obscure.
MS = illegible or otherwise faulty manuscript.
p = punctuation at fault.
Quots. = quotation marks needed.
Ref. = make the reference clearer.
Sp. = mistake in spelling.
Tr. = transpose.
V = vague.
W = wordy.
∧ = something needed to fill out the meaning or the construction.
x = any obvious fault.
¶ = paragraph.
No ¶ = no paragraph.
ℐ = omit (dele).
? = a query as to fact, meaning, or construction.

III. Punctuation

The Period

2. Use a period (1) After a declarative sentence. If, however, a declarative sentence is included parenthetically in another sentence, it is not followed by a period:

Gregory swore (I heard him with my own ears) that he would avenge the insult.

(2) After an abbreviation. If an abbreviation comes at the end of a declarative sentence, a single period suffices:

The next man to enter was the Hon. J. Dalby Sanders, M.F.H.

The Question Mark

3. Use a question mark (1) After an interrogative sentence. (2) After parts of an interrogative sentence when you wish to emphasize them separately:

Would this turn of events shatter his hopes for the future? his dreams of a peaceful retirement?

(3) Within parentheses to express doubt or uncertainty concerning a word or statement immediately preceding:

1. His death resulted from an accidental (?) overdose of morphia.
2. Chaucer was born in 1340 (?) in the city of London.

Do not use a question mark (1) After an indirect question unless the whole sentence asks a question:

1. He asked when I was going.
2. Did he ask when I was going?

(2) After a purely rhetorical question that needs no answer and is really exclamatory in effect:

Gave him a black eye, did she! Isn't that a jolly way to treat a husband!

The Exclamation Point

4. Use an exclamation point (1) After words, phrases, and sentences that express strong feeling:

1. "Pah! I shall probably be speared through the back in the beastliest possible fashion," he thought with an inward shudder.
2. "By heavens! I will go to Wajo!" he cried.

(2) After words, phrases, and sentences in dialogue to indicate unusual loudness of tone:

He smiled obsequiously, and all at once, without provocation, began to bellow:
"Hey! Johnnie! Hab got fish? Fish! One peecee fish! Eh? Savee? Fish! Fish!"

(3) In parentheses to indicate criticism of a word or statement immediately preceding:

He wrote me that the road was impractical (!) for automobiles.

The Comma

5. Use a comma (1) To separate any words or groups of words that might cause confusion or delay if erroneously linked together:

1. To Malcolm, Henderson seemed scarcely mature.
2. Ever since, that day had been deeply graven on his memory.
3. Suddenly the car stopped, jolting me forward against the front seat.
4. Then, before long, guns were invented.

(2) After a subordinate clause that precedes a main clause, especially if the subordinate clause is long or ends with words that might be joined with the beginning of the main clause:

Although it is wise to look before you leap, sometimes it is good policy to leap quickly.

(3) To set off a non-restrictive clause or phrase. See page 558.

(4) To separate adjectives modifying the same noun and words or groups of words used in a parallel series:

1. He was round, red, and jolly-looking.
2. He was alarmed at her white face, at her brusque movements, at the nervous way in which she was fumbling at her throat.

(5) Before *but, yet, though, while, only,* etc., used to add an independent clause to a sentence:

1. She likes him well enough, only she is too obstinate to admit it.
2. I wish I could go with you, but I cannot afford to.

(6) Before *as, for,* and *since* when they introduce a reason:

1. He is going at once, for the mail closes at five.
2. I could not give him money, as my pocketbook was empty.

(7) Before *and so* and *so that* when they introduce a result:

They were very tired, and so I let them rest awhile.

(8) To set off words introducing, or embedded in, a short quotation:

1. Looking up shyly, he said, "I don't know why I have been telling you all this."
2. "There will be fifteen years in jail at the end of this job for everybody," said Shaw, "and I have a boy who doesn't know his father yet. Fine things for him to learn when he grows up."

If a question mark or exclamation point immediately precedes the explanatory words, it takes the place of a comma:

"Hadn't I better hang about here to take you back again?" he suggested, as he let go her hand.
"You mustn't!" she exclaimed, anxiously.

(9) To set off a vocative:

Send this on board the schooner at once, Mr. Carter.

(10) To set off mild interjections and stronger interjections not followed immediately by exclamation points:

Come now, isn't it about time you answered? "By heaven, I won't!" cried Lingard.

(11) To set off appositives:

Piero, Duke of Milan, was slain in that same battle.

If an appositive is part of a proper name, no comma is used:

William the Silent. Charles the Bold.

(12) To set off an absolute phrase:

The first task completed, he turned resolutely to the second.

(13) To set off a transitional word or phrase 1. when emphasis is placed on the connection; 2. when it is long; 3. when it might otherwise be mistaken for a modifier of some element in the sentence:

1. Moreover, she herself seemed to avoid all direct discussion of that element in their fate.
2. In addition to the several advantages just enumerated, there is another advantage deserving especial attention.
3. Did Charles, then, tell a lie?

(14) To set off any slightly parenthetical element:

1. There is not, I verily believe, a single thought or act of his life that I do not know.
2. It is better, perhaps, to tell him at once.

(15) To set off *yes* and *no* and other adverbs modifying the entire sentence:

1. No, I never saw you before.
2. Truly, I wish you all happiness.
3. I will show you the way, certainly.

(16) To set off a phrase showing position or residence:

1. Major Wimbly, of the British army.
2. Samuel Adams, of Massachusetts.

If the phrase is an integral part of a name, no comma is used:

John of Gaunt. The senator from Nevada.

(17) To separate words repeated for emphasis:

Time dragged on slowly, slowly.

(18) To set off an extended group of words placed between subject and predicate:

The woodchuck, as soon as he heard my first footfall, sat up on his haunches.

(19) To separate the name of a place from that of a larger geographical unit:

London, Ontario. Vermillion, Clay County, South Dakota. Long Island, New York.

(20) To separate the name of a street, park, square, etc., from that of its town or city:

School Street, Boston. Lincoln Park, Chicago. The Hotel Pennsylvania, New York City.

(21) Between the items of dates:

Wednesday, July 28, 1926.

(22) After a surname followed by a given name or initials:

Thackeray, William Makepeace. Shaw, G. B.

(23) To mark off the thousands in large numbers, except street numbers, dates, and similar designations:

1,230,000 shares of stock. 28,400 bales of cotton. 2400 Lake View Avenue. In the year 2400 B.C.

(24) To separate declarative and interrogative elements in an interrogative sentence:

You were asleep, were you not?

(25) After the greeting in a friendly letter.

The Semicolon

6. Use a semicolon (1) Between independent clauses that are not joined by a coördinating conjunction. For a detailed discussion of this very important rule of punctuation, see page 557.

(2) Between groups of details or of associated words if one of the groups contains a comma:

These qualities naturally are not expected in a shopkeeper or a Chinaman peddler: they are considered indispensable only for a man who, of noble birth and perhaps related to the ruler of his own country, wanders over the seas in a craft of his own and with many followers; carries from island to island important news as well as merchandise; who may be trusted with secret messages and valuable goods; a man who, in short, is as ready to intrigue and fight as to buy and sell.

(3) To set off an element with more force than would result from the use of a comma:

No; I will never permit that to happen.

(4) After such an expression as *he said* when it comes between clauses that should be separated by a semicolon:

"I see no reason for leaving," he said; "therefore I shall remain."

The Colon

7. Use a colon (1) Before a long quotation formally introduced, and before a short quotation that is to be set off distinctly from what precedes:

The Rev. Mr. Drinkwater then arose and spoke as follows:
"Ladies and gentlemen, I am indeed glad . . . "

(2) Before any quotation not introduced by a verb of saying:

He gave her a sidelong glance: "Have you really?"
She raised her eyebrows: "Can you doubt me?"

(3) To show that an example or an illustration follows.

(4) To show that amplification or explanation follows:

I have three clear aims in life: to develop all my powers of body and mind; to be a useful citizen; and to lay aside enough money for a modestly comfortable old age.

(5) Before a formal list:

Please send me the following items:
1. One half-gross of Novabrom, size 8 x 10.
2. One K-2 filter, two inches in diameter.
3. Two cartons of Tabloid "Rytol."

(6) Between minutes and hours in abbreviations of time:

The train leaves at 12:35.

(7) Between chapter and verse in references to the Bible.

(8) Between place of publication and the name of the publisher in references to a book.

(9) After the greeting of a business letter.

The Dash

8. Use a dash (1) After an incomplete sentence, especially if it stops abruptly:

"I can think of nothing," Lingard declared, unexpectedly. "I only know that your voice was friendly; and for the rest—"

If the broken sentence is interrogatory or exclamatory, a question mark or an exclamation point follows the dash.

(2) To mark a change of construction within a sentence:

I've got to speak a homeward-bound ship or a man-of-war—that's plain enough. I am not anxious to knock about for days in an open boat, but—let me fill my fresh-water breaker, Captain, and I will be off.

(3) Near the end of a sentence to mark an afterthought:

I came here, to speak in the most vulgar way, to save your skin—and mine.

(4) To set off a parenthetical element. Dashes indicate a greater degree of separation than do commas, as a rule; and a lesser degree than do marks of parenthesis:

Their country of land and water—for the sea was as much their country as the earth of their islands—has fallen a prey to the western race.

(5) Before a summarizing word or expression:

They have kept to this day their love of liberty, their fanatical devotion to their chiefs, their blind fidelity in love and hate—all their lawful and unlawful instincts.

(6) Before a word or group of words ending a sentence when special emphasis or emotion is to be indicated. The dash may be inserted where no punctuation would ordinarily be used, or as a substitute for a comma:

1. There stands the—thief!
2. What he really wanted Lingard to do was to cease to take the slightest interest in those whites—who were the sort of people who left no footprints.

Parenthesis Marks

9. Use parenthesis marks (1) To set off matter not necessary to the structure or thought of the sentence in which it stands. The conventions in regard to punctuation within the marks of

parenthesis, or adjacent to them, may be gathered from the following examples:

1. He told her (he lied when he said it) that the train had gone.
2. He told her (he lied, the coward!) that the train had gone.
3. He told her (did he know that he was lying?) that the train had gone.
4. He told her that the train had gone (the liar!).
5. If he told her that the train had gone (and I believe that he did), the blame rests on him.

(2) To set off stage directions in a play:

Elizabeth (*gayly*). Is it really? (*She takes up the saucer gingerly.*) What a treasure!

Note: A sentence within parentheses, but standing apart, as in the example under Rule (2) above, is punctuated as though no marks of parenthesis enclosed it.

Quotation Marks

10. Use quotation marks (1) Before and after every direct quotation, long or short. If two or more paragraphs are quoted, put quotation marks at the beginning of each paragraph and at the end of the last one.

(2) Before and after a word or phrase to which the reader's attention is directed as a word or phrase:

"Folks" is a word that the cautious writer handles with gloves.

Italics are used for the same purpose. See page 554.

(3) Before and after every separate speech in dialogue (except in plays):

"I'll not say another word."
"John, don't be simple. It's only a game. Go on."
"I'll not."
"Go on, John."
"Well," he began, and stopped short.

(4) Before and after technical terms (unless italicized), slang, provincialisms, and so on:

1. To cope with "tarantism," the name given to the disease that follows on the bite of the Italian Spider, you must have recourse to music.
2. He was certainly what they call a "hummer."
3. Finally, one day in the summer of 1919, his old friend "Tanner" Smith was killed in a fight, and the press mentioned very prominently the name of Robert Shore (now known as "Rubber" Shore) in connection with the affair.

(5) Before and after the titles of articles, short stories, short poems, chapters of a book, and so on. Usage in regard to titles is not fixed: they may be put in quotation marks or in italics. A good general rule to follow, however, is to put titles of magazines and books in italics, reserving quotation marks for the separate items of which the magazines or books are composed:

The July *Scribner's* contains an interesting article on "Psychology and the War."

Note: A quotation within a quotation is set off by single quotation marks:

"You remember," he asked, "what Franklin said about visitors? 'Visitors, like fish—' "
"Oh, yes, I remember," she broke in.

A period or a comma should always precede, never follow, final quotation marks. If a question mark, an exclamation point, a colon, or a semicolon is a part of the quotation, it should precede the final quotation marks; if it is not a part of the quotation, it should follow the final quotation marks:

I was surprised to hear him say "guv'ment."
Did he actually say "guv'ment"?

Brackets

11. Use brackets before and after comments, notes, explanations, or any other matter inserted in a passage by one not the author of the original:

1. If everybody minded their [*sic*] own business . . .
2. In 1828 Wyman moved to Gaget. [This is obviously a misprint for *Paget*.]
3. I quote from the New York Times of July 11: "I [Dr. Ettinger] am very frank to confess that I dissent most heartily from the basic thesis set up by Principal Wolfson that it is the function of our schools to allow students and teachers to express their beliefs freely."

Ellipses

12. Use ellipses (1) In a quotation to mark the omission of a part of the original matter:

Boswell admits at the beginning that "to write the Life of him who excelled all mankind in writing the lives of others . . . may be reckoned . . . a presumptuous task."

(2) In dialogue to mark breaks in the thought, unfinished sentences, and pauses in the utterance of a thought:

I didn't ask him anything. I only know that something has happened which has robbed him of his power of thinking . . . Hadn't I better go to the hut?

I have just come back to life and it has closed on me colder and darker than the grave itself. Let me get used . . . I can't bear the sound of a human voice yet.

She is gone . . . where naturally she would be anxious to go first of all since she has managed to come to us.

EXERCISES IN PUNCTUATION

I. The best drill in punctuation is to copy passages of well-written contemporary prose, omitting all marks of punctuation; to re-punctuate these after the originals have been forgotten; and then to compare your results with the originals. If persisted in faithfully, this drill will overcome all ordinary obstacles.

(1) Begin with short passages, increasing the amount of work as your mastery of punctuation increases.

(2) Choose passages that you understand, and do not confine your choice to the work of only one or two writers.

(3) Identify each copy so that you can easily turn to the original.

(4) Whenever your punctuation differs from that of the original, try to find the reason for the difference.

II. Punctuate the following sentences:

1. The principal address of the evening was made by the Rev T H Wyndham D D
2. She asked me how I liked Deerfield
3. But where are the means for this venture the men the supplies the arms and ammunition
4. You lie you coward
5. The audience has assembled but the speaker is not here
6. It's lucky we are on time for the train will not wait
7. When I first saw this falcon perched on the topmost branch of the tall elm which is the chosen watch-tower of the hawks that visit the garden I noticed nothing to distinguish him from all the others of his species that I had known
8. Then one day there came an offer from a little town across the mountains in Tennessee where the earnest desire for schooling was breaking through the limits of poverty
9. Jump quick John or you'll be killed
10. Well sick men must have their own way I suppose
11. Mr. Wilson the plumber is here

12. His youth was one long dillusionment one series of thwarted desires

13. What is the story of Alfred the Great and the cakes

14. Finally the book is calculated to defeat its avowed purpose for there is no more certain method of preventing revisions than to wreck treaties by bringing discredit on their authors

15. Moreover Sir Henry's chapter on The Approach to Shakespeare is based upon facts derived from these branches of study

16. The subject of debating however does not belong to this book

17. You are I suppose the best judge of that

18. In our party were Mr and Mrs Henderson of New York Col Tompkins of Washington D C and the two senators from Alabama

19. Coutesy coöperation and vision controlled and directed by knowledge born of long and varied experience have enabled this bank year after year to become increasingly valuable to the business public

20. Forty versts they had come without stopping bringing two small guns

21. New decrees have been issued promising insurance against sickness accidents old age motherhood widowhood orphange and in some cases unemployment

22. It seemed as though the day would never never end

23. The Coöperatives are at present as Krassin quite rightly states mere government organs without purchasing selling or distributing power

24. Beginning on Tuesday September 28th my address will be 6244 Antioch Avenue Corning New York

25. It is really better to go at once is it not

26. The ethic that humanitarianism imposes may turn out to resemble at many points the ethic imposed by religion but it will not resemble it at all points for the principle of authority makes all the difference

27. There are no valves to be ground no tappets that stick the longer you drive it the smoother and more silent it runs

28. Emerson's gardener was probably better fitted to survive than Emerson Newton's butler than Newton himself

29. The basic principle on which every compound sentence must be constructed is parallelism that is as all the clauses are coördinate so they must be correlative in content and similar in form

30. Sometimes we find several of these sources together a character in its setting with a partially developed plot may come into our experience it may even typify some law in life or principle of human nature

31. *Macbeth* is regular in its structure the exposition explains Macbeth's position and the rise begins in act I scene 3 in which the witches prophesy that he will be king the climax is reached in act III scene 4 where Banquo is killed and the fall begins with the escape of Fleance in that same scene the resolution comes when Macduff enters with Macbeth's head at the end of the last act

32. I used to think that I understood your motives he continued but now it seems that that Go on urged Merton

33. And Johnny the every-inch-a-scholar the giver of life to dead tongues Johnny has gone perhaps "to see the great Achilles whom he knew"

34. Up to this moment all the moccasins round about me and there were eight or ten of them within view and undoubtedly others amid the vines and fallen palmetto branches had lain passive or had merely crawled sluggishly about their business

35. Every church has been built on beliefs that men would go to the stake for and did

36. From all sides voices called to each other and answered back in the guttural tones peculiar to soldiers Tomorrow I am on duty at the theater I've got a week's leave Gaberian who is verger at Saint Sulpice now He was put forward for examination at the last inspection Imagine a fellow blowing out his brains when he hasn't a single punishment marked against him

They were all Gardes de Paris from the neighboring barracks awaiting the nine o'clock tattoo

Waiter a bowl of punch and three glasses called Monsieur de Villacourt seating himself at a table occupied by only two soldiers

When the punch was brought he filled the three glasses pushed one toward each man and rising said

I drink your good health gentlemen You are soldiers I have to fight a duel tomorrow I have nobody to stand by me but I feel sure that I see two seconds before me now

What do you say eh Gaillourdot said one of the men turning to his comrade after looking into Monsieur de Villacourt's eyes The other without answering took his glass and clinked it against that of Monsieur de Villacourt

Good tomorrow morning at ten o'clock Room 27

Done with you said the soldiers

Next morning just as Denoisel was starting with Dardouillet to go to Monsieur Boisjorand de Villacourt his bell rang and the two soldiers entered Their directions being to agree to everything conditions weapons distances the arrangements for the duel were very soon completed

IV. Capitals and Italics

Capitals

13. (1) Capitalize the beginning of every separate sentence, direct or quoted, and of single words or groups of words that perform duty as sentences:

He asked, "Is that the house you mean?" "Yes."

(2) Sentences inclosed in brackets or parenthesis marks are capitalized if they are isolated, but not capitalized if they are incorporated in other sentences.

1. Clay. Why, of course. Come along, Fleming. [*They go into the garden.*]

2. His suggestion (would you believe it?) was to make off with the money.

(3) Capitalize the beginning of every line of poetry.

(4) Capitalize the beginning of the salutation and the close of a letter:

My dear Henry Very truly yours

(5) Capitalize the beginnings of separate items in a formal list, especially if the items are separately paragraphed:

Please send me at your earliest convenience:
1. One keg of galvanized shingle-nails.
2. One half-keg of ten-penny wire nails.
3. Two rolls of 4-ply tar-paper, not less than a yard wide.

(6) Begin with capitals all proper names and all important words which are parts of a proper name:

(*a*) *Names of persons* (animal, human, or divine): Maud S. (a horse); Flip (a dog); Henry Thoreau; Allah; Krishna; God.

(*b*) *Names of places and geographical divisions:* Long Island Sound; Niagara Falls; Hudson's Bay; the Connecticut River; Cape Breton; Washington County; Michigan Avenue; Central Park; south of New London; cotton is the staple crop of the South; the White Mountains.

(*c*) *Names of institutions*: the Supreme Court; Congress; Harvard University; the Horace Mann School; the Union League Club; The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

(*d*) *Names of buildings, bridges, monuments, etc.:* the Grand Central Station; the Ford Building; the Washington Monument; Westminster Bridge.

(*e*) *Names of months, days of the week, legal holidays, and other days of historical or religious significance:* Labor Day; the Fourth of July; Washington's Birthday; St. Valentine's Day; Good Friday.

(*f*) *Names of historic events and eras:* the French Revolution; the Battle of the Wilderness; the Middle Ages; the Renaissance.

(*g*) *Names of countries, races, languages, states; and popular appellations used as proper names:* Switzerland; an Iberian; he reads Latin; he speaks French; the Empire State; a Hoosier; the Rockies.

(7) Capitalize adjectives derived from proper nouns except when the derivation has become obscured.

Chinese silk; a Spanish fan; india ink; a china bowl.

(8) Capitalize titles of office, of rank, of courtesy, etc., when they are part of a name or are used in place of a name:

King George V; the Marquis of Landsdown; President Carnot; Ambassador Geddes; Admiral Sims; Senator Cummings; the Bishop of Rhode Island; Captain Worthington.

(9) Capitalize the beginnings of titles of books, plays, stories, poems, pictures, and statues—and important words thereof:

Darwin's *Voyage of a Naturalist;* Raphael's *Sistine Madonna.*

(10) Capitalize trade names:

Wheatena; Mellin's Food; a Pierce-Arrow; a Locomobile; Ivory Soap; Lavoris.

(11) Capitalize the pronoun *I* and the interjection *O.*

Italics

14. Usage in respect to italics varies considerably. Most newspapers make little or no use of them. Some publishers have special regulations of their own. Italics are indicated in a MS by a horizontal line drawn under the letters or words to be italicized.

(1) Italicize a word or phrase for especially strong emphasis (but use this means of emphasis sparingly).

(2) Italicize the names of separate publications, such as books, magazines, pamphlets; the names of works of art, such as musical compositions, pictures, and statues:

Lamb's *Essays of Elia;* Chopin's *Grande Valse;* Michelangelo's *David.*

(3) Italicize letters or words which are referred to specifically as letters or words:

Some New Yorkers pronounce the word *girl* as though it were spelled *goil*.

(4) Italicize foreign words and phrases:

The diplomats met *in camera*.

(5) Italicize names of ships:

The *Carpathia* hurried to the aid of the *Titanic*.

V. Fundamentals of Grammar

The treatment of grammar here given is limited to the statement and illustration of the rules most frequently violated by college students and to the answering of those questions about grammatical usage which students most frequently ask. If this discussion of grammar is used in conjunction with the Exercises in Grammar (page 572) and with the list of Grammatical Terms (page 579), it will help students to correct and to avoid errors into which they are prone to fall. The questions answered are:

1. What is a "period fault"? (Page 556.)
2. What is a "comma blunder"? (Page 557.)
3. How are restrictive and non-restrictive clauses to be distinguished? (Page 558.)
4. Should a collective noun be treated as singular or plural? (Page 558.)
5. How is the possessive case formed? (Page 559.)
6. Should the pronoun be singular or plural? (Page 560.)
7. Should the pronoun be masculine, feminine, or neuter? (Page 560.)
8. Which is correct, *who* or *whom? he* or *him? she* or *her?* etc. (Page 561.)
9. Should the verb be singular or plural? (Page 562.)

10. Which tense is right? (Page 565.)
11. Which is correct, *shall* or *will? would* or *should?* (Page 567.)
12. When is it proper to omit a word? When is it not? (Page 569.)
13. How should participles and gerunds be used? (Page 570.)

15. What is a "period fault"? A "period fault" consists in capitalizing and punctuating a subordinate sentence-element (usually a subordinate clause) as though it were a sentence.

WRONG	RIGHT
I spoke to John about the matter this evening. Before he went out. (The subordinating conjunction *before* marks what follows as a subordinate sentence-element, incapable of standing alone.)	I spoke to John about the matter this evening before he went out.

A sentence contains a subject and a predicate and is grammatically independent of any words outside itself. A subordinate clause is introduced by a relative pronoun or a subordinating conjunction. A phrase has no subject or predicate. Both the subordinate clause and the phrase are grammatically incomplete. To treat them as independent units, separating them from the sentences of which they are only subordinate parts, is to commit a serious blunder. The sure way to avoid this blunder is to make certain that every sentence contains at least one independent finite verb, expressed or implied clearly in the context.

When a single word or an elliptical expression is practically equivalent to a sentence, it is properly capitalized and punctuated as a sentence.

1. "Did you see Forbes Robertson in London?" "No."
2. "Where is the fire?" "In Bailey's lumber-yard."
3. "Did you enjoy your stay in Colorado?" "Very much, indeed."
4. "Land ho!" "Where away?" "Three points off the starboard bow, sir."

16. What is a "comma blunder"? A "comma blunder" consists in using a comma between coördinate clauses under conditions that require a semicolon. A writer who habitually commits this fault is deficient in "sentence sense."

(1) A comma may separate coördinate clauses (*a*) when they are brief, closely related in thought, and have the same subject:

I came, I saw, I conquered.

(*b*) when they are closely related in thought, are connected by conjunctions, and have no internal punctuation:

She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.

(2) A semicolon should separate the clauses (*a*) when they are not connected by conjunctions (with the exception of the brief clauses noted above):

WRONG	RIGHT
One hears of English economies, evidently they begin with the dressmaker's bill.	Two things have I required of thee; deny me not them before I die.

(*b*) when one of them contains internal punctuation:

WRONG	RIGHT
They seem to be constitutionally unable to learn anything from the blows other nations have received, or are now receiving, and they must be hit, and hit hard, before they awake to the fact that there is any danger.	Genius, which produces literature, is born in its possessor and cannot be acquired; but the craft of writing can be learned by anyone, like carpentry or dancing.

(*c*) when the relation between them is close enough to warrant their being joined together in a sentence, yet not so close as it is in the examples in Paragraph (1) above:

One who writes description must have a point of view; and if the point of view is changed, definite notice must be given to the reader.

17. How are restrictive and non-restrictive clauses to be distinguished? A restrictive clause is a "close modifier" and should not be separated by a comma from the word it modifies. A non-restrictive clause, on the contrary, does not limit or define its antecedent. It is parenthetical or explanatory, giving some additional fact about an antecedent that has previously been defined or that does not need definition. Such a clause should be set off by commas.

RESTRICTIVE	NON-RESTRICTIVE
1. The man who drove me over to the station this morning was very talkative.	1. Amory's man-of-all-work, who drove me over to the station this morning, was very talkative.
2. The house which Slawson inherited from his grandfather is the oldest in town.	2. Slawson's house, which he inherited from his grandfather, is the oldest in town.

If you are in doubt as to whether or not a relative clause is restrictive, read the sentence without the clause in question; if such omission changes the meaning of the sentence, the clause should be treated as restrictive. Failure to observe the distinction is a mark of slipshod writing; such failure may even cause serious misunderstanding—as may be seen in the following sentences, which differ widely in meaning:

1. All the members of this class, who have done well in their daily work, will be excused from the examination.
2. All the members of this class who have done well in their daily work will be excused from the examination.

18. Should a collective noun be treated as singular or plural? As singular, if the persons or things denoted by it are thought of as a group or unit; as plural, if they are thought of as separate individuals.

1. In this country the *majority rules.*
2. The *majority* of our miners *are* Lithuanians.
3. The *crew was* composed almost entirely of Deer Islanders.
4. The *crew were* at loggerheads with one another.

Caution: Be consistent in your use of a collective noun; do not shift suddenly from one number to the other.

WRONG	RIGHT
The jury brought in its verdict after a half hour's deliberation. Judge Rand thanked *them* for the promptness and justice of *their* decision.	The jury brought in its verdict after a half hour's deliberation. Judge Rand thanked the *jurymen* . . .

19. How is the possessive case formed? (1) A noun in the singular number forms the possessive case by adding *'s;* in the plural number, by adding an apostrophe (') if the plural ends in *s*, and by adding *'s* if the plural does not end in *s*.

SINGULAR	PLURAL
boy, boy's	boys, boys'
Lewis, Lewis's	Lewises, Lewises'
man, man's	men, men's
child, child's	children, children's

Caution: It is seldom permissible to use a neuter noun in the possessive case. As a general rule, a phrase with *of* should be used instead.

WRONG	RIGHT
the roof's edge	the edge of the roof
the house's sides	the sides of the house
the road's rules	the rules of the road
the verb's parts	the parts of the verb
the table's top	the top of the table

The chief exceptions to this rule are certain phrases that imply personification, such as *for pity's sake, for mercy's sake, the sun's rays, the moon's light, the ship's speed,* and *his heart's delight;* and phrases that express time or measure, such as *the day's work, a week's wages, an hour's ride, two months' vacation,* and *a stone's throw.*

(2) Pronouns have special forms for the possessive case, as *my, mine, his, her, hers, its, our, ours, your, yours, their, theirs,* and *whose.*

20. Should the pronoun be singular or plural? A pronoun agrees in number with the antecedent.

(1) Pronouns should be singular when referring to the indefinite pronouns *another, each, every, one, anyone, anybody, either, neither,* and others ending in *-body* or *-one;* or to singular nouns modified by *a, another, any, each, every, either, neither,* or *one;* or to such words as *man, person, kind, sort.*

WRONG	RIGHT
1. Anyone can have *their* shoes shined here free of cost.	1. Anyone can have *his* shoes shined here free of cost.
2. Every person in the room turned *their* backs on me.	2. Every person in the room turned *his* back on me.

(2) When the demonstrative pronouns (*this, these, that, those*) are used as adjectives, they agree in number with the words they modify.

WRONG	RIGHT
I don't like *those* kind of person.	I don't like *that* kind of person.

(3) Collective nouns take a singular or a plural pronoun according to the meaning of the sentence.

1. The committee is ready to submit *its* report.
2. The committee took *their* seats promptly.

21. Should the pronoun be masculine, feminine, or neuter? A pronoun agrees in gender with its antecedent.

(1) If the antecedent is of common gender, it is customary and convenient to use a masculine pronoun ("generic masculine").

1. Each student must have *his* report ready on Monday.
2. A person cannot do *his* best work under such conditions.

In legal documents, contracts, and other writings in which the utmost precision is necessary *he or she, his or her, him or her,* are used to refer to an antecedent that may be either masculine or feminine.

(2) In referring to persons, use *who* or *whom*, not *which*.

WRONG	RIGHT
There are a few people *which* still trust me.	There are a few people *who* still trust me.

If a group of persons is thought of impersonally as a unit, *which* may properly be used.

I was a member of the jury *which* heard the Phelps case.

22. Which is correct, *who* or *whom? he* or *him? she* or *her?* etc. The case of a pronoun is determined by its use in the sentence, not by the case of its antecedent.

(1) The object of a verb or preposition should be in the objective case.

WRONG	RIGHT
1. Some of *we* girls went skating last evening.	1. Some of *us* girls went skating last evening. (*Us* is the object of *of*.)
2. I saw the messenger *who* you sent.	2. I saw the messenger *whom* you sent. (*Whom* is the object of *sent*.)

(2) The subject of an infinitive and the predicate substantive that completes an infinitive should be in the objective case.

1. *Whom* do you believe to be the greatest American? (*Whom* is the subject of *to be*.)
2. They suppose the anonymous correspondent to be *me*. (*Me* completes *to be* by describing or limiting its subject.)

(3) A pronoun used as a predicate complement should be in the nominative case.

1. It is *I*.
2. It is *she*.

"It is me" is colloquialism.

(4) The subject of a verb should be in the nominative case.

WRONG	RIGHT
1. You may lend the book to *whomever* asks for it.	1. You may lend the book to *whoever* asks for it. (*Whoever* is the subject of *asks;* the clause *whoever asks for it* is the object of *to.*)
2. The question of *whom* should sign his name first led to an argument.	2. The question of *who* should sign his name first led to an argument. (*Who* is the subject of *should sign;* the clause "who should sign his name first" is the object of *of.*)

(5) In elliptical clauses of comparison introduced by *than* or *as*, use the case required by the construction of the expanded clauses.

WRONG	RIGHT
1. She is several years older than *me.*	1. She is several years older than *I.* (*I* = I am.)
2. I can run as fast as *him.*	2. I can run as fast as *he.* (*He* = he can run.)

Such errors as those just corrected are probably due to a mistaken idea that the conjunctions *than* and *as* are prepositions.

(6) An appositive should be in the same case as the substantive with which it is in apposition.

1. We three are on the committee, Caroline, you, and *I.*
2. She has put us three on the committee, Caroline, you, and *me.*

23. Should the verb be singular or plural? The general rule is that a verb should agree in number with its subject. The cases which most frequently give difficulty in the application of this rule are noted below.

(1) Two or more substantives joined by *and* take a plural verb, unless they are closely related in meaning or name the same person or thing.

1. Martha and I *are* going to the dance.
2. Bread and milk *was* once my favorite supper dish.
3. Sir Clarence's only son and heir *is* serving Her Majesty in India.

(2) Two or more singular subjects joined by *or* or *nor* take a singular verb.

Neither Ready nor Spelman *is* capable of filling that position.

(3) If a subject consists of plural and singular substantives joined by *or* or *nor*, the verb should agree with the nearer.

Neither money nor friends *were* lacking.

(4) Words joined to a subject by *with, along with, together with, including, in addition to, as well as, accompanied by,* and similar expressions, do not change the number of the subject.

1. The house, together with all its contents, *was* sold to Mr. Prince.
2. Good old John, accompanied by the twins as usual, *was* the first to greet me.

(5) The number of a subject is not affected by the addition of words introduced by *not, and not,* or *but not.*

Fitness, not influence or money, *was* my one consideration in making the appointment.

(6) Nouns plural in form but singular in meaning usually (but not always) take a singular verb. *Athletics, ethics, economics, mathematics, physics, news, politics, series, measles,* and *gallows* are usually construed as singular; *contents, pains, proceeds, riches,* and *scissors,* usually as plural; *links* (a golf term), *means,* and *statistics,* as singular or plural.

1. Ethics *is* a profitable study.
2. These scissors *are* dull.
3. As a science, statistics *is* in its infancy.
4. There *are* no statistics available.

(7) A collective noun may be construed as singular or as plural. See page 558.

(8) Singular pronouns, *each, every, one, anyone, someone, no*

one, everyone, anybody, everybody, nobody, either, neither, take singular verbs.

WRONG	RIGHT
1. Everybody *were* pleased with the performance.	1. Everybody *was* pleased with the performance.
2. Neither of us *know* the answer.	2. Neither of us *knows* the answer.

(9) A relative pronoun with a plural antecedent takes a plural verb.

WRONG	RIGHT
1. It is one of the most valuable patents that *has* been granted in years.	1. It is one of the most valuable patents that *have* been granted in years.
2. She is one of those girls who *appears* to advantage in a large gathering.	2. She is one of those girls who *appear* to advantage in a large gathering.

(10) A verb should not be drawn out of agreement with its subject by intervening words.

WRONG	RIGHT
1. Either Smith or Elkins, both of them crooks, *are* behind this move.	1. Either Smith or Elkins, both of them crooks, *is* behind this move.
2. A list of honor students in chemistry *were* posted in the laboratory.	2. A list of honor students in chemistry *was* posted in the laboratory.

(11) A verb should not be drawn out of agreement with its subject by a predicate noun in a different number.

WRONG	RIGHT
Too many social engagements *was* the cause of my failure.	Too many social engagements *were* the cause of my failure.

An awkward difference in number between verb and predicate noun can be avoided by recasting the sentence; e.g.,

1. Too many social engagements caused my failure.
2. My failure was caused by too many social engagements.

(12) *It is* and *there is* should precede a singular noun; *there are*, a plural noun.

1. It is a long time since we have seen one another.
2. There is nothing worth considering in this offer.
3. There are many persons who oppose his election.

24. Which tense is right? (1) When the verb in a governing clause is in a past tense, the general rule of tense-attraction is that finite verbs in subordinate clauses should be in a past tense likewise.

WRONG	RIGHT
1. He bought the rug because he *likes* it.	1. He bought the rug because he *liked* it.
2. When they passed the *Vamose* at the second stakeboat they felt sure that they *will* win the race.	2. When they passed the *Vamose* at the second stakeboat they felt sure that they *would* win the race.
3. The work was slow and difficult, as we *are* not used to it.	3. The work was slow and difficult, as we *were* not used to it.

Exception: If a dependent clause expresses a fact that is independent of time, such as a general truth of science, the present tense (timeless present) is used.

1. He said that summer *is* the season of hurricanes in the West Indies.
2. He declared that Shakespeare's influence in England *is* not more potent than Dante's in Italy.

(2) The past tense expresses an action that took place at a stated time in the past. If the time is not clearly implied by the context a time modifier should be supplied.

"Were you ever in San Francisco?" "Yes, I was there."

The answer seems incomplete and unsatisfactory because the past tense is used without any indication of time. An appropriate time modifier, such as "when I was a boy," or "a few years ago," or "last summer," should be supplied.

(3) The past perfect tense expresses an action completed prior to an action expressed by the past tense.

I hurried to the wharf as fast as I could, but found to my dismay that the ship *had sailed*. (The sailing of the ship took place before his discovery of the fact, and hence is expressed by the past perfect tense.)

(4) The present perfect tense expresses an action begun after an action expressed by the past tense.

We *have been* homesick ever since we left Detroit. (The homesickness was subsequent to the leaving, and therefore is expressed by the present perfect tense.)

Caution: As the present perfect tense represents the action as continuing to the time of speaking or writing, it should not be used with a time modifier that limits the action to a definite time in the past.

WRONG	RIGHT
Yesterday I *have searched* for it everywhere.	Yesterday I *searched* for it everywhere. Since yesterday I *have searched* for it everywhere.

(5) The tense of an infinitive is relative to that of the governing verb. Do not let an infinitive be wrongly attracted into the perfect tense; remember that the perfect infinitive is to be used only when it represents an action prior to the action of the governing verb.

WRONG	RIGHT
1. I intended *to have gone* to Europe with Jack and Amos. (His intention was not "to have gone" but "to go" with them.)	1. I am sorry *to have disturbed* you. (The act of disturbing was prior to the feeling of sorrow.)
2. We hoped *to have seen* you there.	2. We hoped *to see* you there.

(6) The present participle denotes an action that takes place at the same time as the action of the governing verb.

WRONG	RIGHT
As age is reckoned in America Harvard is an ancient institution, *being* founded in 1636.	As age is reckoned in America Harvard is an ancient institution, *having been* founded in 1636.

(7) The only real justification for using the "historical present" is an imagination that brings a past event so vividly before one that he almost feels it to be taking place as he writes. If one has not such an imagination, he had better use only past tenses in speaking of past events; for failure to visualize a scene completely is apt to make him wobble between past and present:

After they had punished each other for some time, they came near the donkey, which had been asleep when they fought at a distance from him; but when they bump against him, he awakens so suddenly that he does not understand what had happened. In his fright he kicked out both heels, knocking the fighters apart, and began to run away as fast as he could go. When the two men see the donkey running so fast, they are both troubled.

25. Which is correct, *shall* or *will? should* or *would?* The somewhat perplexing rules governing the use of *shall* and *will* are reduced to their simplest terms in the following paragraphs. The rules there given are sufficient for all ordinary conversation and writing.

(1) To express simple futurity use *shall* (*should*) in the first person and *will* (*would*) in the second and third persons.

1. I (we) *shall* miss you greatly after you leave.
2. If you were to leave now, I (we) *should* miss you too much.
3. You *will* have no difficulty in finding the house.
4. Unless the train is late, he (she, they) *will* arrive in time for dinner.
5. They were afraid that they *would* not arrive in time.

(2) To express determination or volition on the part of the

speaker use *will* (*would*) in the first person and *shall* (*should*) in the second and third persons.

1. I *will* not answer that question.
2. If you keep your promise, we *will* keep ours.
3. You *shall* get no more money from me.
4. That news *shall* never reach him if I can prevent it.
5. He (she, they) *shall* never have my consent.

(3) In a question use *shall* or *should* in the first person; in the second and third persons use the form expected in the answer.

1. *Shall* I ask him to stay to supper?
2. *Shall* we go to the game this afternoon?
3. *Shall* you take the express or the local? (Answer: I *shall* take . . .)
4. *Will* you carry out your agreement? (Answer: I *will*.)
5. *Will* the game be played in Chicago this year? (Answer: The game *will* be played . . .)
6. *Shall* they be compelled to pay for this? (Answer: They *shall* be . . . =I intend to make them pay.)

(4) In indirect quotation use the form appropriate to direct quotation. *Shall* and *will* are changed to *should* and *would* if the sequence of tenses requires the change.

1. I told him I *should* take the early train. ("I *shall* take the early train.")
2. He said he *would* not give his consent. ("I *will* not consent.")
3. I told him that he *should* go, whether he liked it or not. ("You *shall* go, whether you like it or not.")
4. They say that she *will* arrive on Monday. ("She *will* arrive on Monday.")

(5) In a conditional clause *should* is ordinarily used to express simple futurity; *would*, to express volition.

1. If they *should* come before I return, please ask them to wait.
2. You could if you *would*.

(6) *Should* is used to express obligation; *would*, to express customary or habitual action.

1. I (we, you, he, she, they) *should* learn how to concentrate.
2. When Uncle Billy came back from the village, I (we, you, etc.) *would* always run out to meet him.

26. When is it proper to omit a word? When is it not? (1) *Proper omissions.* When the omitted word can readily be supplied in the correct case or number, ellipsis is a legitimate device of rhetoric, saving a deal of monotonous repetition and making for a vigorous and nervous style.

1. A little religion is apt to make men gloomy, as a little knowledge is to render them vain. (The *apt* of the first clause is easily carried over into the second clause.)
2. It is one thing to see your road, another to cut it. (The full form of the second clause—*it is another thing to cut it*—is readily supplied.)
3. Stones have been known to move, and trees to speak. (The words *have been known* are at once seen to belong to the second clause as well as to the first.)

(2) *Faulty omissions.* When the omitted word cannot be supplied easily, ellipsis is an obstacle to clear comprehension.

The king was fonder of the prince than the queen.

Was the king fonder of the prince than *of* the queen, or was the king fonder of the prince than *was* the queen? Only the writer knew exactly what he meant, and he has made a mystery of it by omitting one necessary word.

(*a*) Avoid the "ungrammatical ellipsis"—which occurs when the word to be supplied from the context is in the wrong case or number.

1. They are uncongenial in several small respects. Henry dislikes early rising; Tod and George, lying a-bed. (Tod and George *dislikes?*)
2. Then the brake fern was unrolling, the doves cooing, the thickets astir, the late ash-leaves coming forth. (The doves *was* cooing?)

(*b*) Do not omit *that* when it introduces a relative clause if the omission will cause even a temporary obscurity.

The best that can be offered by the best writer of prose is to show us the development of the idea and the stylistic pattern proceed hand in hand. (The omission of *that*, which should introduce the clause beginning "the development of the idea," makes hard reading.)

(*c*) Do not omit the articles, *a* or *the*, when they are needed to distinguish persons or things mentioned.

1. He repeated lines from the sixth and last Canto. (This would be correct if the sixth Canto were also the last.)
2. He was identified by the secretary and treasurer of the company, who were both positive. (The omission of *the* before *treasurer* is misleading.)

(*d*) Do not omit the pronoun *I* because of false modesty or in order to save time or space. The effect of the omission is unquestionably cheap:

Have rec'd. yours of the 21 inst. and will give matter immediate attention.

27. How should participles and gerunds be used? (1) Remember that participles are used as adjectives, and that gerunds are used as nouns. Though the same in form, participles and gerunds have distinct functions in the sentence, as these examples show:

PARTICIPLES	GERUNDS
1. I saw him *reading* "The Raven."	1. I enjoyed his *reading* of "The Raven."
2. I like to hear them *talking* together.	2. I am weary of their constant *talking*.

They should never, therefore, be treated as coördinate.

WRONG: After the pushing and shoving had ceased, and standing on my soap-box, I managed to get a glimpse of the Lord Mayor of London. (*Pushing* and *shoving* are gerunds; *standing* is a participle.)

(2) The word that a participle modifies according to the meaning of the sentence should be the word that it modifies grammatically.

WRONG: Having finished with this school, his parents desired him to be a clergyman, and so Carlyle walked eighty miles to the University of Edinburgh. (Speaking in terms of grammar, *having finished* modifies *parents;* speaking in terms of what the sentence means, the participle modifies *Carlyle.*)

(3) A noun and its modifying participle may be grammatically independent of the rest of the sentence; in which case they form an "absolute construction." This is most frequently used with the force of a causal or temporal clause.

1. The night growing chill, she gathered her cloak tightly about her.
2. The meal ended, he arose abruptly and stalked out of the room.

(4) A participle should not be used without a noun for it to modify.

WRONG	RIGHT
Looking across the bay, the trailing smoke of a steamer was visible.	*Looking* across the bay, *we* saw the trailing smoke of a steamer.

Looking, in the faulty construction given above, is an example of a "dangling modifier."

Exceptions: A few participles, such as *speaking, judging,* and *taking,* are used idiomatically in an absolute construction without a noun:

He was not, strictly *speaking,* a British subject.

(5) A gerund phrase (*while walking, after shaving, in speaking*) should be related to the substantive that names the agent or recipient of the action that it expresses. The substantive should be a part of the sentence, and should be so placed that the relation between phrase and substantive is unmistakable.

If a gerund phrase begins a sentence or clause, it should be related to the subject thereof.

WRONG	RIGHT
After *having finished* with that school, his *parents* urged him to go to college.	After *having finished* with that school, *he* was urged by his parents to go to college.

(6) Avoid the faulty construction with the gerund which puts a noun or pronoun in the objective case instead of in the possessive.

WRONG	RIGHT
1. The bill failed because of Smith filibustering.	1. The bill failed because of Smith's filibustering.
2. She did not approve of them leaving so early.	2. She did not approve of their leaving so early.
3. I cannot tolerate him speaking to you in that way.	3. I cannot tolerate his speaking to you in that way.

EXERCISES IN GRAMMAR

(*a*) Point out and correct all the mistakes in grammar to be found in the following sentences. Some of these sentences are free from error; do not suggest needless changes on the assumption that alterations are demanded, but judge each sentence on its own merits.

1. In some important respects railroads are a peculiar class of business concerns; and they should be regulated. To deprive them of opportunity and ability to practice extortion upon the public.
2. She was making mince pies, her husband, Adam Fenn, liked them better than any other kind.
3. College life is dangerous to character. For many students go wrong at college.
4. An independent prediction is logically complete. And may stand by itself as a sentence.

5. A team is composed of eleven players. Each of whom has a title which designates his position and duties.

6. A man, who always pays his debts promptly, can always obtain credit.

7. The company has shown that they are deeply interested in the prosperity of their employees.

8. The jury are unable to agree on its verdict.

9. The committee is requested to reconsider their proposal.

10. In spite of the fact that our team were heavier, it could not win.

11. One of these table's legs is shorter than the others.

12. Everywhere Caesar turns, good luck and fortune meets him.

13. Some of the men were reluctant to go because they held that Mr. Taft as President and Mr. Taft as a political stump speaker was two different persons.

14. The result is a literature which would be deprived of all human interest, were not envy and malice, like an inverted charity, one of the strongest and most binding of social instincts.

15. Lancaster High goes up against its strongest proposition of the season when they meet Harrisburg Tech. on Saturday.

16. The fatigue was so great that it presently began to make some head against the nervous excitement; while imagining myself wide awake, I would really doze into momentary consciousness, and come suddenly out of them with a physical jerk which nearly wrenched my joints apart.

17. If it does not mean that the Republicans of Albany County will be roused to the point of replacing him with a man of the type which has never soiled their hands with dirty party machinery, then it will fail.

18. Each human being, by mere birth, has a birthright in this earth and all its productions; and if they do not receive it, then it is they who are injured.

19. One or the other of those miserable collies have dug up the geraniums.

20. The skipper, as well as all his women passengers, were thoroughly frightened.

21. Misrepresentation and slander has hurt him beyond all reparation.

22. A constantly growing stream of immigrants from Southern and Western Europe, Italians, Greeks, Armenians, Slavonians, etc., have been pouring in through the national flood-gates at Ellis Island.

23. No sooner was the convention assembled than Yancey arose to address them.

24. In all fairness, it should be added that neither of his followers were in favor of using dynamite except as a last resort.

25. Practical politics is the applied art of government.

26. The Society has decided to hold a special meeting on Friday at Bradlee Hall, where they will assemble for the torchlight procession.

27. She was an eloquent speaker, and no one but she could have led so gloriously the triumphal chorus over the defeat of the Egyptians at the Red Sea.

28. They were in doubt about who they should get to take Harrison's place.

29. I should like to be him just long enough to answer that question.

30. Occupying the same compartment was a quietly-dressed young man, who he soon discovered to be a fellow-countryman.

31. The responsibility for the final decision devolved upon we older members of the staff.

32. It will not be necessary for Albert and I to take the final examination.

33. The late cashier was one of those persons whom everybody thought was honest.

34. You may give this pile of papers to whomever is willing to cart them away.

35. It was not until four o'clock that the Lewiston Academy shell left their boathouse.

36. The memory of his gentleness, his patience, his firm faith, and his great and loving heart are the priceless heritage of a united land.

37. Now there was on the tops of these mountains shepherds feeding their flocks, and they stood by the side of the path.

38. There was plenty of grass burns in the protective strips.

39. The cause of our delay between York and Chambersburg were three blow-outs.

40. The corporal, together with his two prisoners, were haf-dead with fatigue.

41. Each of the players were given a share of the gate receipts.

42. All sorts of news and gossip is welcomed by the crew of the lightship.

43. The last two or three miles of this road was in a very bad condition.

44. Every one turned their heads to look when Barton ushered the indignant women to the door.

45. Let us now take up the consideration of one of the corruptions which has lived through its day of trial and has long been received into the best literary society.

46. Jones is one of the fastest half-backs that has ever played on our team.

47. Seated on an upright tombstone, close to him, was a strange unearthly figure, whom, Gabriel felt at once, was no being of this world.

48. I will shoot whomever crosses that line.

49. The judges announced him to be the winner.

50. Their gag-rule works both ways, for it hits them as well as us, and old Macready worst of all—he of all men!

51. In having the subject of this sentence a long phrase is a grammatical error.

52. Looking through a gap in the foliage, a scarlet tanager was seen swaying on the topmost bough.

53. In glancing at the pages of *Hereward*, the large proportion of dialogue will be one of the first things to strike the reader's attention.

54. Having read the *Journal* for a quarter of a century, his duty seemed obviously to be to defend that respectable publication.

55. To expect praise was foreign to that dog's nature, having long been schooled to hard knocks and imprecations.

56. After having tried to banter me down and recognized his mistake, which he loyally did for himself and never

repeated, we had much pleasant talk together first and last.

57. The constant thanks and good wishes of the neighborhood always attended him on account of his remarkable enmity toward foxes; having destroyed more of those vermin in one year than it was thought the whole county could have produced.

58. The next day commenced as before, getting up and dressing by rushlight.

59. The gipsy-moth is a formidable pest. If undisturbed, the shade trees will be defoliated in a surprisingly short time.

60. I spent some time out in that country where Harnish lives, occupied in miscellaneous prospecting.

(*b*) Complete the following sentences by inserting *who* or *whom*, *whoever* or *whomever*, as the case demands:

1. The boy —— you said was prompt, was late today.
2. The boy —— I thought was prompt, was late today.
3. The boy —— you sent to me, came late.
4. —— did you say went first?
5. It was a question of —— could do the work.
6. They could not tell —— the salute was meant to honor.
7. —— do you mean?

(*c*) Insert *shall* or *will*, *should* or *would*, in the blanks below, and then explain your choice in each instance:

1. I think I —— stay on here at the Cliff House until the middle of August, at least.
2. I —— see this thing through the courts if it takes my last cent to do so.
3. If you —— hold my horse a moment, I —— be greatly obliged.
4. I am bound that he —— retract that baseless charge against my honor.
5. Watch the door with pistols, that none —— issue out.

6. If that is discovered, you —— be disgraced forever.

7. The captain decided that John —— be allowed to carry the message.

8. We doubled our sentries, for we all thought that the enemy —— try to take advantage of the heavy fog.

9. I —— not be in his shoes for the whole world.

10. I told them that if they had only been fair to me in the first place, I —— not have raised any objections at the final meeting. And I added that as things now stood I —— oppose their plan with all the means at my command.

11. The publisher of *Endymion* was nervous as to the reception which potent critics —— accord to the volume.

12. I set off pell-mell for Margate because forsooth I thought I —— like my old lodgings there, and could continue to do without trees.

(*d*) Improve the handling of tenses in the following sentences:

1. Now and again he slid back a tiny shutter, disclosing a little oblong of light, and peered through into the furnace, where the broad flame of the sprayed oil licked roaring about the cone. Then would the engine-room artificer insert a thin rod of steel with a flanged end and clear the furnace of the caking deposit; then he closes the tiny shutter, and stands vigilant. Behind him the piston of the air-pump forcing in the oil jumped smoothly up and down.

2. What those of us who know Non best liked about him is that he was a plain business man, and that he has acted in this particular matter without any fine moral frills or remarks.

3. If I do not hurry, I will miss my train.

4. At the time when I first told you about it, I expected to have gone to Omaha.

5. He said it is not right to have turned the selvage edge of the material outward as you were doing.

6. He said that you will not permit him to store the lumber on your land.

7. They bob to Theobald as they passed the reading desk ("The people hereabouts are truly respectful," whispered

Christina to me, "they know their betters."), and take their seats in a long row against the wall.

(*e*) Point out the ellipses in the following sentences and discuss the desirability of each omission:

1. R. T. Harrison, the first witness, said Solvik, the alleged assailant, was a passenger on the 11:20 car for Redstone.
2. John ate the beans, but I could not.
3. As I have lived most of my life in Connecticut, I am better acquainted with her manufacturing conditions than with any other state.
4. Being a small, friendly-looking dog, she was not afraid to pet him.
5. Taking the upper road, Camden can be reached.
6. I enjoy fishing when they are plentiful.
7. She liked rest and retirement, the movement and social flutter; she was old, they young.
8. The letter said his brother and daughter would arrive on Wednesday.
9. The Penston House is farther from Hamilton than St. George.
10. She caught a glimpse of the bishop and temporary rector hurrying across the lawn.
11. Putting the question is in general the way to limit the theme . . . Putting the question is also the way to go on, ought to be repeated at each stage of the research.
12. Impossible to reply to this in the affirmative; my little world held a contrary opinion: I was silent.
13. He had exchanged the contemplative leisure of Horton for a busy life, in which no hour but had its calls.
14. At first, this piece pleased the people less than the critics.
15. Nothing bolder, more incalculable, was ever done by a poet in the period of his storm and stress. The boundless and how to express it, was never sought with more audacity.
16. Of all the forms of literature, essay seems at first sight the least definite.

17. It is soul-satisfying to take up a paper of real wit, as *Punch*, and read it through.

18. When seven years old, his father, incapacitated for further service, retired to England.

19. Mr. Jacobs quotes Kennedy that in a parallel Irish tale "Jack the servant is the spirit of the buried man."

20. It was for just such a club as that which Mr. Paulus Pleydell presided, that Burns made the famous collection of sculduddery which is known as *The Merry Muses of Caledonia*.

21. Reason respects the differences, and imagination the similitudes of things. Reason is to imagination as the instrument to the agent, as the body to the spirit, as the shadow to the substance.

22. Thaws had ended in rain, rain in wind, wind in dust.

23. When he was deferential his nose kissed his lip; combative, it cocked his hat.

24. Cardinal Guido, indeed, as he fully intended, looked superb; strong as a saint and impassive as an image of Caesar.

25. "Down to bed rock" and "peter out" are natural expressions among miners, but they become slang when transferred to other circumstances and used as figures of speech.

VI. Grammatical Terms

Absolute construction. A substantive and its modifier (usually a participle) related in thought to the sentence in which it stands, but not grammatically related to any word therein. "*The rain ceasing,* they left their shelter."

Accidence. That part of grammar which treats of inflections.

Accusative. See Case.

Active voice. See Voice.

Adjective. A word that modifies a substantive. "Never drink water from a *stagnant* pool."

Adjective clause. A subordinate clause that modifies a substantive. "The man *who borrowed your lantern* has returned it."

Adjective phrase. A phrase that modifies a substantive. "A woman *of no importance.*"

Adjunct. A modifier or a predicate complement.

Adverb. A word that modifies a (1) verb, an (2) adjective, or (3) another adverb.

1. Mary laughed *heartily.*
2. The house has a *very* pleasant location.
3. He had spoken *too* eagerly.

Adverbial clause. A subordinate clause used as an adverb. "He will not answer *when he is spoken to.*"

Adverbial phrase. A phrase used as an adverb. "It is warm *on the porch.*"

Agreement. Concord or correspondence of two parts of speech in gender, number, person, or case. (1) A verb agrees with its subject in person and number. (2) A pronoun agrees with its antecedent in gender, number, and person. (3) An appositive agrees with its substantive in gender, number, and case. (4) A demonstrative adjective agrees with its substantive in number.

1. They *were* tired.
2. Ann hurried to meet *her* father.
3. That car is Henry's, *his* beyond question.
4. *These* papers are mine.

Antecedent. The substantive to which a pronoun refers. "The *man* who would be king."

Appositive. A substantive (or substantive clause) that limits, describes, or explains another substantive and denotes the same person or object.

1. My sister *Helen.*
2. The fact *that he was lying* troubled me.

Article. The definite article is *the;* the indefinite, *a* or *an.*

Auxiliary. A verb used with an infinitive or participle of another verb to form a verb phrase.

1. I *shall* go.
2. You *are* asking too much.
3. He *may* remain.

Cardinal numbers. *One, three, seven, eighty-five,* etc., are cardinal numbers, in distinction from *first, third, seventh, eighty-fifth,* etc., which are ordinal numbers.

Case. The grammatical relation of a substantive to some other element of a sentence as shown by inflection or position. A substantive is in the **nominative** (or **common**) case when it is the subject or predicate complement of a verb; in the **possessive** (or **genitive**) case when it signifies possession or ownership; in the **objective** (or **accusative**) case when it is the object of a verb or preposition. Nouns have two forms to show case, the nominative and the possessive; e.g., *lamb, lamb's.*[1] Pronouns vary considerably in case inflection, some having three forms and others but one. The personal pronouns and *who* (as interrogative or relative) have three forms; e.g., *he, his, him.* The possessive, demonstrative, and reflexive pronouns have no variation in form to show case. Some indefinite pronouns (such as *any, both,* and *each*) have only one form; others (such as *another, one,* and *other*) have two forms; e.g., *one, one's.*

Clause. A subject and predicate (with or without modifiers) forming part of a sentence that contains at least one other clause. A **principal** or **independent** clause is logically complete—makes an independent assertion. "When the train started, *we gave a cheer.*" A **subordinate** or **dependent** clause is not logically complete; its grammatical function is that of an adjective, adverb, or substantive. "I saw *that the current was carrying him toward the whirlpool.*" In this example the subordinate clause is a substantive clause, object of *saw.* In the

[1] Possession is frequently signified by a prepositional phrase: "the fleece of a lamb."

preceding example the subordinate clause is an adverbial clause modifying *gave*. In the following example the surbordinate clause is an adjective clause modifying *city*: "Toledo is a city *that I have long wished to see.*"

Collective noun. See Noun.

Common noun. See Noun.

Comparison. The change in form of an adjective or adverb to signify the degree of its quality, quantity, or manner: *sharp, sharper, sharpest; small, smaller, smallest; pleasantly, more pleasantly, most pleasantly.* The **positive degree** indicates the presence of a quality or manner. The **comparative degree** indicates its presence in a degree relatively greater than in some standard set for comparison. The **superlative degree** indicates its presence in the fullest measure possible.

Complement. See Predicate complement.

Complex sentence. A sentence containing one principal clause and one or more subordinate clauses. "His courage revived when he saw the distant lights of the village."

Compound sentence. A sentence containing two or more principal clauses. "Wool is very cheap now, but the buyers are timid."

Concessive clause. An adverbial clause making an admission which does not affect the truth of the assertion in the principal clause. "*Although defeat stared them in the face,* our players kept on doing their level best."

Conditional clause. An adverbial clause denoting on what terms the assertion of the principal clause is made. "*If it rains,* I shall stay at home."

Conjunction. A word used to connect words, phrases, clauses, or sentences. A **coördinating conjunction** connects sentence elements of the same order or rank. "I called to her, *but* she did not answer." "He needs more sleep *and* exercise."

A **subordinating conjunction** joins a subordinate clause to a principal clause. "It was snowing *when* I left the house."

Construction. The grammatical function of a given word, phrase, or clause. In the sentence "Cats like fish," the construction of *cats* is that of subject of *like;* of *like,* the predicate of *cats;* of *fish,* the object of *like.*

Coördinate. Words, phrases, or clauses having the same construction in a sentence are coördinate.

1. My favorite sports are *sailing* and *fishing.*
2. He said *that the summers were pleasant,* but *that the winters were long and dreary.*

Coördinating conjunction. See Conjunction.

Copula, copulative or linking verb. The copula is any form of the verb *to be.* An intransitive verb which joins its subject to a predicate complement is called a *copulative* or *linking* verb.

1. This bread-and-milk *tastes* good.
2. He *became* a surveyor.

Correlative conjunctions. Conjunctions used in pairs: *both . . . and; either . . . or; neither . . . nor.* They are coördinating.

Declension. See Inflection.

Demonstrative adjectives. *This* and *these, that* and *those* when used as adjectives. "*This* letter is from Uncle Ben."

Demonstrative pronouns. *This* and *these, that* and *those* when used as pronouns. "Independence, security, peace of mind—*these* are the rewards of thrift."

Dependent clause. See Clause.

Ellipsis. The omission of one or more words necessary to grammatical completeness. "He said he would go." *That* is omitted.

Essential modifier. See Modify.

Expletive. *It* or *there* when used to anticipate the subject of a verb. "*It* is wise to remain." *It* introduces the verb; the real subject (*to remain*) follows the verb and is in apposition with *it*.

Finite. A *finite* verb is capable of making an independent assertion concerning its subject. A *finite* form of a verb is one that shows agreement with its subject in person and number. The *finite* modes are the indicative, the subjunctive, and the imperative. The *non-finite* forms of a verb are the infinitive, the gerund, and the participle; they are not capable of making independent assertions.

Gender. Classification of substantives as masculine, feminine, common (either masculine or feminine; e.g., *cousin*), and neuter.

Gerund. A verbal noun ending in *ing*. Like a verb it may be modified by an adverb and may have a direct object. "He had learned the trick of *aiming* a shotgun quickly." (*Aiming* is modified by *quickly* and has *shotgun* for its object.) Like a noun, a gerund may be the subject of a verb or the object of a verb or of a preposition; it may be modified by an adjective. "Rapid *walking* is good exercise." (Modified by adjective; subject of verb.) "I like *walking*." (Object of verb.) "Use care in *shifting* gears." (Object of preposition.)

Gerund phrase. See Phrase.

Govern. A clause on which another clause depends is said to be a *governing* clause and is said to *govern* the dependent clause. A verb or a preposition *governs* its object.

Idiom. An expression, or combination of words, peculiar to a language. Such combinations as "wit of the stairway," "make to sing the beard," and "is it that it is the umbrella green of my aunt" are *idiomatic* in French, but *unidiomatic* in English; just as "take into consideration," "carried all before him," and "agreeable to his purpose" are idiomatic in English, but not in French. The largest single group of

English idioms consists of combinations of certain prepositions with certain verbs, substantives, or adjectives. For example: we *look at* a picture, *over* a lesson, *up to* a hero, *down upon* a coward, *through* a bureau drawer, *out for* danger, *out of* a window, *into* a matter, *around for* something, *in* the dictionary, and *up* a word or an acquaintance.

Imperative. See Mode.

Independent clause. See Clause.

Independent predication. See Predication.

Indicative. See Mode.

Indirect object. See Object.

Indirect quotation. A quotation that gives the substance of the original, but not the exact wording. It is dependent upon a verb of saying, asking, or thinking.

1. He said that he would go with us.
2. He asked if he might go with us.

Infinitive. A verbal noun, usually (but not necessarily) preceded by *to*. It has all the uses of a noun in the nominative or the objective case; e.g., as subject, object, predicate complement, or appositive. "*To err* is human." "I like *to read*." "That remains *to be seen*." The verbal nature of the infinitive is shown by these facts: it has voice and tense; it combines with auxiliaries to form verb phrases ("I shall *remain*"); it is modified by an adverb; it takes an object ("I hope to see *him*") and a predicate complement ("He aims to be *rich*").

Inflection. Change in the form of a word to show change in meaning or to show the relation of one word to another. The inflection of substantives—called **declension**—shows case and number (*man* is nominative or objective case, singular number; *men's* is possessive case, plural number). The inflection of adjectives and adverbs—called **comparison**—shows degree (*good, better, best*). The inflection of verbs—called **conjugation**

—shows person, number, tense, voice, and mode. For example: "I am" is first person, singular number, present tense, active voice, and indicative mode; "They will be" is third person, plural number, future tense, active voice, and indicative mode.

Intensive and Reflexive. The pronouns *myself, himself, herself, ourselves, themselves,* and others like them are called **intensives** when used in apposition. "They *themselves* said so." They are called **reflexives** when they are the object of a verb and denote the same person or thing as the subject. "They deceived *themselves.*"

Interjection. An exclamatory word or phrase not grammatically related to other words in the sentence. "*Oh,* don't do that!"

Intransitive. A verb that does not take an object is called *intransitive.* The action that it represents does not require a receiver or thing to be acted upon, but is complete in itself or else (in the case of copulative verbs) is completed by a predicate complement.

1. He *slept* soundly.
2. He *seems* asleep.

Limit. A modifier is said to *limit* the word, phrase, or clause that it modifies.

Mode or Mood. To indicate the attitude of the speaker toward the action represented by a verb, the verb has three sets of inflections known as modes. The **indicative mode** is used to state or question a fact (or what the speaker regards, or would have his listener regard, as a fact). "I *enjoyed* Conrad's latest novel." "*Have* you *read* Johnson's latest novel?" The **subjunctive mode** is used when the action is thought of as uncertain or contrary to fact, or as a wish, a hope, a possibility, or a supposition. "He *could* lead his class if he *wished.*" "If I *were* he, I *should* lead the class." "Heaven *reward* you for all your kindness to me." "Oh, that I *had forgiven* her before it was too late!" The **imperative mode** is used to express a com-

mand or an entreaty. The subject (always in the second person) is commonly omitted. 1. "By the right flank, *march.*" 2. "*Stop* whispering."

Modify. A sentence element that qualifies, limits, or restricts the meaning of another element is said to *modify* it, and is known as a *modifier.* "Dogs bite." "Mad dogs bite." The meaning of *dogs* in these two sentences is not precisely the same: in the second sentence the subject is limited by *mad* and no longer denotes the whole class; *mad* modifies *dogs.* If to the sentence "He plays tennis" the word *expertly* is added, the meaning of *plays* is changed somewhat; therefore *expertly* modifies *plays.* A modifier is **essential** or **restrictive** if its omission would seriously affect the meaning of the sentence. "New Orleans is the largest city in Louisiana." The adjective phrase "in Louisiana" is an essential modifier; its omission would change truth to falsehood. "My brother John lives in Des Moines, my brother Ralph lives in Sioux City, and my brother Wilfred lives in Omaha." The appositives *John, Ralph,* and *Wilfred* are essential modifiers; their omission would alter the sentence to mean that the speaker had one brother, who lived in three different places. A modifier is **non-essential** or **non-restrictive** if it simply gives additional information about the element it modifies. "My oldest sister, *Mrs. Milton Riggs,* lives in San Diego." "*Turning quickly,* he caught the lady smiling at him." The italicized modifiers are non-essential and might be omitted without seriously changing the meaning.

Nominative. See Case.

Noun. A word that names a person, place, or thing. A **proper noun** is the name of a particular person, place, or thing: *Winslow Homer, Atlanta, Hotel Pennsylvania.* A **common noun** is the name of any one of a class of persons, places, or things: *girl, village, furnace.* A **collective noun** is the name of a group of persons or things: *people, committee, herd.* An **abstract noun** is the name of a quality, action, or condition considered apart from any person or thing: *heaviness, affection, beauty.* A

compound noun is composed of two or more words: *suit-case, post office, man-of-war.* For **noun clause,** see Substantive clause.

Number. The form of inflection which tells whether one thing or more is spoken of. If a substantive denotes one person, place, or thing, it is **singular** in number; if it denotes more than one, it is **plural.** With but few exceptions, substantives change their form when they change their number (*I, we; cow, cows*). A verb, also, has number, which is always that of its subject. Sometimes the number of a verb is shown by its form ("He *owns* a cow."); sometimes its number is shown only by that of its subject ("I own a cow." "The Adamses own a cow.").

Object. The object of a transitive verb is a substantive denoting the person, place, or thing affected in any way by the action. A substantive denoting a person, place, or thing acted upon directly is called the **direct object.** "I bought a *necktie.*" A substantive denoting a person, place, or thing indirectly acted upon is called the **indirect object.** "I bought *my husband* a necktie." The object of a preposition is the substantive that follows the preposition and that is connected by the preposition to some other element of the sentence. "He fell off the *end* of the *wharf.*"

Parenthetical. A word or group of words (other than an absolute construction) having no grammatical relation with the sentence in which it stands is called *parenthetical.* "This is not, *I am sure,* the right road to Yonkers."

Participle. A verbal adjective. It may be used like an ordinary adjective: "*Barking* dogs do not bite." But it has tense and voice, may be modified by an adverb, may take an object, and may in other ways be used as a verb—except that it cannot be used to make an assertion. "Clearing the last hurdle easily, he sprinted . . ." (*Clearing* governs *hurdle,* and is modified by *easily.*) "Being a rash youth, he did not hesitate." (*A rash youth* is predicate complement of *being.*)

Parts of speech. The classes into which words are divided according to their grammatical use. There are eight parts of speech: nouns, pronouns, adjectives, adverbs, verbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections. Many words may be now one part of speech, now another, depending on their use; e.g.,

1. He dug a *well.*
2. I am *well.*
3. She plays *well.*

Passive. See voice.

Person. Change in the form of a verb or a personal pronoun to distinguish between the person speaking (**first person**), the person or thing spoken to (**second person**), and the person or thing spoken of (**third person**). "I am; you are (thou art); he is."

Phrase. A group of related words, other than a clause, used as a part of speech. Unlike a clause, a phrase cannot contain both a subject and a predicate. The following groups are phrases: "was becoming known," "in the room," "above the city," "in regard to," "of fine texture," "looking upward."

Plural. See Number.

Possessive adjective. A possessive form of a personal pronoun used as an adjective. "*My* kingdom for a horse!" The possessive adjectives are *my, mine, our, thy, thine, your, his, her, its, their.*

Predicate. The part of a sentence or clause that contains what is said about the subject. A predicate consists of a finite verb with or without adjuncts. "The bell *rang.*" "The bell *rang so loudly that I could not get to sleep.*" The **simple predicate** is the verb alone. The **complete predicate** is the verb and all its adjuncts.

Predicate adjective. See Predicate complement.

Predicate complement. The word or words used in the predicate to complete the meaning of a copulative verb. The predicate complement may be a substantive ("He is a *sailor.*"); a substantive clause ("It proved *to be what every soldier fears.*") a gerund ("Seeing is *believing.*"); an infinitive ("Such facts get *to be known.*"); an adjective ("She grew *weary.*"); or an adjective phrase ("Our hostess was *in despair.*").

Predication. A group of words consisting of a subject and a predicate. A simple sentence or a principal clause is an **independent predication;** a subordinate clause is a **dependent predication.**

Preposition. A word used to connect a substantive with some other element of a sentence: the bottom *of* a well; drive *along* the lake front; *during* his absence; looking *for* the mail.

Preposition phrase. Two or more words used as a preposition: *by means of, for the sake of, with reference to, as for.*

Prepositional phrase. Consists of a preposition and the word it governs. Prepositional phrases are used either as adjectives or as adverbs. See Adjective phrase and Adverbial phrase.

Principal clause. See Clause.

Principal parts. The principal parts of a verb are the present infinitive, the first person singular of the past tense, and the past participle.

Pronoun. A word that refers to, or is used instead of, a noun. A **personal pronoun** indicates person (see Person); e.g., *I, me, you, she, it.* A **possessive pronoun** signifies possession or ownership. "That portion is *yours.*" The possessive pronouns are *mine, ours, thine, yours, his, hers, theirs.* When used as adjectives, *mine, thine,* and *his* are **possessive adjectives.** A **demonstrative pronoun** points out a person or thing. "*That* trout weighs over a pound." See Demonstrative pronouns. An **interrogative pronoun** is used in asking a question. "*What*

have you heard?" The interrogative pronouns are *who* (possessive *whose*, objective *whom*), *which*, and *what*. A **relative pronoun** connects a subordinate clause with a substantive in a principal clause. "He *who* runs may read." Common relatives are *who* (*whose*, *whom*), *which*, *that*. An **indefinite pronoun** points out a person or thing less definitely than does a demonstrative pronoun. "*One* of us must go." Among the indefinite pronouns are *any*, *some*, *another*, *one*, *each*, *many*, *few*, *several*. A **reciprocal pronoun** (*each other*, *one another*) signifies mutual action or relation. "Classmates should speak to *one another*." A **compound personal pronoun** is an intensive or a reflexive. See Intensive and Reflexive.

Relative clause. An adjective clause, introduced by a relative pronoun or adverb. "That monument marks the spot *where Mercer fell*."

Restrictive. See Modify.

Sentence. A group of words that expresses a complete thought. It must contain at least one independent predication.

Sentence element. Any one of the grammatical parts contained in a sentence: principal clause, subordinate clause, phrase, subject, predicate, and so on.

Simple sentence. A sentence containing but one predication. "Leiter, angry as a hornet, threw open the door of his study with explosive violence."

Singular. See Number.

Subject. The part of a sentence or clause about which an assertion is made. The **simple subject** is a substantive or its equivalent. "The *frame* of the machine is made of aluminum." The **complete subject** is the simple subject together with its modifiers. "*The frame of the machine* is made of aluminum."

Subjunctive. See Mode.

Subordinate clause. See Clause.

Subordinating conjunction. See Conjunction.

Substantive. A noun or pronoun.

Substantive clause; noun clause. A clause used as a substantive. Such a clause cannot denote possession, but otherwise it is the grammatical equivalent of a substantive. "*That he had survived such a fall* appeared miraculous." (Subject of verb.) "I heard *what you said.*" (Object of verb.) "My belief is *that you were right.*" (Predicate complement.) "The candy belongs to *whoever finds it.*" (Object of preposition.) "The fact *that he had never ridden a horse* did not deter him." (Appositive of *fact.*)

Syntax. That part of grammar which treats of the relations of words and groups of words.

Tense. Change in the form of a verb to indicate the time of the action. The verb has two inflectional forms to show time: **present** (I *have*, I *know*, I *take*, I *call*) and **past** (I *had*, I *knew*, I *took*, I *called*). The other tense forms are verb phrases: **present perfect** (I *have had*, I *have known*), **past perfect** (I *had had*, I *had known*), **future** (I *shall have*, I *shall know*), and **future perfect** (I *shall have had*, I *shall have known*).

Transitive. A verb that takes an object is called *transitive.* Many verbs may be used transitively or intransitively.

1. He *stuck* a feather in his cap.
2. This cobbler *sticks* to his last.

Verb. A word used to make an assertion about a person, place, or thing.

1. The sun *shines.*
2. We *left* the city.
3. His car *struck* a telegraph pole.

Verb phrase. A phrase composed of a verbal and one or more auxiliaries, and used as a verb.

1. The children *are going* to school.
2. He wondered if he *had been seen.*
3. I *ought to have won* the race.

Verbal. A non-finite form of the verb, incapable of making an assertion. The verbals are the *infinitive*, the *gerund*, and the *participle*.

Voice. Change in the form of a verb to show whether the subject acts or is acted upon. The **active voice** represents the subject as acting: "His constant talk *annoyed* me." The **passive voice** represents the subject as acted upon: "I *was annoyed* by his constant talk."

VII. Spelling

28. Suggestions. 1. Keep at your elbow a reliable dictionary to consult when in doubt about the spelling of a word. Convenient volumes for this purpose are *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*, the *Concise Oxford*, and the *College Standard*.

2. Provide yourself with a small memorandum book. Jot down in this book words that you have misspelled, that you have had to look up in the dictionary more than once, or that you have in any other way found bothersome. Learn to spell these words one at a time. Keep at a word until you have mastered it, repeating it both aloud and under your breath and writing it as often as you deem necessary. For this work you can make use of odd moments. When you have learned to spell a word, cross it off your list.

3. Remember that accuracy in pronunciation is often a help to accuracy in spelling. If you pronounce *government* so that it sounds like the spelling *goverment*, you may spell it that way. Students who talk about *ath-e-letics* seldom spell *athletics* correctly.

4. Make sure that you can spell all the words in the list of words frequently misspelled (pages 595-600).

General rules. 1. A word ending in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel (*a*) if accented on the last syllable doubles the final consonant before a suffix beginning with a vowel:

Glad, gladden; stop, stopped; begin, beginning, beginner.

Note: If the accent in the derived form is pushed back a syllable, the consonant is not doubled:

Confer, conferring, conferred; but con'ference.

(*b*) If not accented on last syllable, the word does not double the final consonant before a suffix beginning with a vowel:

Number, numbering differ, difference.

2. A word ending in two consonants, or in a consonant preceded by two vowels, does not double the final consonant before a suffix beginning with a vowel:

Work, worker; stalk, stalking; speak, speaker.

3. Words ending in silent *e* usually drop the *e* before suffixes beginning with a vowel, but retain the *e* before suffixes beginning with a consonant:

Write, writing; love, lovable; arrange, arrangement; sure, surely.

Exceptions: abridgment, argument, acknowledgment, judgment, duly, truly, wholly.

4. A word ending in *y* preceded by a consonant changes the *y* to *i* before any suffix except one beginning with *i:*

Busy, busily, business; story, stories; easy, easier.

5. A word ending in *y* preceded by a vowel keeps the *y* before a suffix:

Chimney, chimneys; employ, employing, employer.

Exceptions: daily, laid, paid, said.

6. Words ending in *ce* and *ge* retain the *e* before suffixes beginning with *a* or *o:*

Courage, courageous; manage, manageable; peace, peaceable.

7. Words containing *ei* or *ie*, with the sound of *ee*, are usually spelled with *ei* after *c*, and with *ie* after *l:*

Conceive, deceive, believe, relief.

Lice and *Celia* are convenient keywords.

8. Adverbs ending in *ly* derived from adjectives ending in *l*, retain both *l's:*

Cool, coolly; real, really; general, generally.

9. Remember that *al* is usually an adjective ending, and that *le* is usually a noun ending:

Brutal, casual, critical; hurdle, particle, trouble.

10. Verbs ending in *ie* usually drop the *e* and change *i* to *y* before the suffix *-ing:*

Die, dying; lie, lying; tie, tying; vie, vying.

11. Of the terminations *-cede, -ceed,* and *-sede, -cede* is by far the most common. One word ends in *-sede—supersede;* three words end in *-ceed—exceed, proceed,* and *succeed.* Other words of the kind end in *-cede.*

Words Frequenly Misspelled

abolish
abscess
absurd
academy
accept
accidentally
accommodate
accumulate
accustom
achieve
acquaintance
acquiescence
acquisition
across
address
adviser
aeroplane
affect
afraid
aggravate
allotted
allowance
all right
already
altar
alter
altogether
alumna (-ae)
alumnus (-i)
always
amateur
among
analogous
analysis
angel
angle
antithesis
anxiety
apology
appall
apparatus
appearance
appropriate
arctic
argument
arising
arithmetic
arrange
arrival
ascend
assassin
athlete
audience
automobile
auxiliary
available
awkward

bachelor
balance
banana
barbarous
bared
barred
based
bearing
becoming
before
beggar
begging
beginning
behavior
believing
benefited
biscuit
boundaries
brilliant
Britain
British
buoyant
bureau
burglar
business
busy
Caesar
calendar
campaign
candidate
can't
carriage
cemetery
certain
changeable
changing
chemistry
chief
chimneys
choose
chose
chosen
Cincinnati
clothes
coarse
column
coming
commission
committee
compel
compelling
competent
concede
conceivable
conferred
conqueror
conscience
conscientious
conscious
continuous
control
controlled
correspondence
counterfeit
course
courteous
courtesy
crises
criticism
cruelty
curiosity
cycle
cylinder
cynical
dealt
debater
deceitful
decision
definite
descend
descent
describe
description
despair
desperate
destroy
develop
device
devise
dictionary
difference
dining
dinning
disappear
disappoint
discipline
dissatisfied
dissipate
divide
division
divine
doctor
don't
dormitories
doubt
dying
earnest
ecstasy
effects
effervesce
eighth

elaborate
eligible
eliminate
embarrass
eminent
encouraging
enemies
enemy
equipped
erroneous
especially
everybody
exaggerate
exceed
excel
excellent
excelling
except
exceptional
excite
exhaust
exhilarate
existence
expense
explanation
explicit
exquisite
extinct
extraordinary
extravagance
facilitate
fallacy
familiar
fascinate
fatigue
February
fertile
fictitious
fiery
fifth
finally
financier
forebode
forehead
foreign
foremost
forest
forfeit
formally
formerly
forth
forty
fourth
fraternity
freshman
friend
fulfill
fundamental
furniture
gallant
gambling
gases
generally
ghost
goddess
government
governor
grammar
grandeur
grief
grievous
guarantee
guard
guess
guidance
gymnasium
handkerchief
happiness
harass
haughty
haul
having
height
heinous
heroes
hesitancy
hockey
holy
hoping
huge
humorous
hundredths
hurried
hygienic
hypocrisy
illegible
imaginary
imitative
immediately
immigrant
incidentally
incredible
incredulous
independence
indictment
indispensable
inevitable
influence
infinite
instance
instant

intelligence
intentionally
irreparable
irresistible
its
it's
itself
invitation
jockey
judging
judgment
juvenile
kerosene
kindergarten
knead
knowledge
knuckle
laboratory
labyrinth
ladies
laid
later
latter
lead
led
leisure
liable
library
lieutenant
lightning
likely
literature
loquacious
loose
lose
losing
luxury
macadamized
maintenance
maneuver
manufacture
many
marriage
Massachusetts
mathematics
mattress
meant
medicine
messenger
miniature
minute
miscellaneous
mischievous
Mississippi
mosquito
murmur
muscle
mustache
mysterious
myth
nasturtium
necessary
negroes
neither
nickel
nineteenth
ninetieth
ninety
ninth
noticeable
obedient
oblige
obstacle
occasion
occurred
occurrence
o'clock
omission
omitted
oneself
opinion
opportunity
oppress
optimist
original
outrageous
owing
oxygen
pageant
pamphlet
paraffine
parallel
paralysis
parliament
parentheses
partner
pastime
peaceable
people
perceive
perceptible
perennial
perform
perhaps
permissible
perpendicular
persevere
perseverance
perspiration
persuade
persuasion

pessimist
petition
petroleum
phenomenon
physical
physician
physiology
planned
pleasant
possession
possible
practicable
practically
prairie
precede
preference
preferred
prejudice
preparation
preparatory
primitive
principal
principle
privilege
probably
proceed
procession
prodigy
profession
professor
proficient
prohibition
prove
proving
pursue
quantity
quiet
quite
radiant
raisin
rapid
razor
ready
really
receive
recognize
recommend
reference
referred
regard
region
rehearsal
religion
religious
repetition
replies
resemblance
reservoir
resistance
responsible
restaurant
revelation
rheumatism
ridiculous
righteous
robin
sacrifice
sacrilegious
safety
salary
sandwich
schedule
scissors
seems
seize
sentence
separate
several
shepherd
shining
shriek
siege
similar
since
smooth
sophomore
speech
stationary
stationery
statue
statute
stopped
stopping
stories
stretch
strictly
succeed
success
superintendent
supremacy
sure
surprise
syllable
symmetry
sympathize
synonymous
technical
temperament
tendency
than
their

there
therefore
they're
thorough
too
together
tolerant
tournament
tract
tragedy
transferred
treacherous
treasurer
trespass
tries
trouble
truly
Tuesday
twelfth
two
unanimous
uniformity
universally
unmistakable
until
using
usually
vacancy
vanilla
vegetable
vengeance
vetoes
vigilance
village
villain
visitor
vocabulary
vulgar
waist
weak
weariness
weather
Wednesday
week
weird
welfare
wherefore
wherever
whether
which
whole
wholly
who's
whose
wiry
wistful
withdrawal
women
wretch
writing
written
yacht
yield
your
you're

APPENDIX B

SPECIMENS

How a Gas Engine Works*

The purr of automobiles and the chug of motor boats have long since ceased to be unusual sounds, yet it is probable that most people are ignorant of the principles underlying the operation of the gas engine—or at best, have but a vague idea how such an engine works. They know that gasoline (because gasoline is the fuel most commonly employed) is used, and have a notion, perhaps, if they know anything of steam engines, that some sort of an explosion takes the place of steam under pressure; but further than this they know very little. In view of this general ignorance, I shall endeavor to explain as briefly as possible and without going into minute technical details, how a gas engine works.

At the present time there are two forms of gas engine in general use: the four-cycle type, in which four strokes of the piston are required to complete one cycle, or operation; and the two-cycle, in which only two strokes are required. The essential parts of the engine are the same in both types, the difference between them being due to a varied arrangement of the parts. Every gas engine must have a cylinder, closed at the top by a stationary cylinder head and at the bottom by a movable piston head which is fitted snugly to the walls of the cylinder. To this piston head is attached a piston rod which operates upon a crank shaft and thus delivers the power of the engine in usable form. In the cylinder there must be two openings, known as "ports," through one of which the explosive mixture is drawn and through the other of which the exploded gases are expelled. The inlet port is connected by a pipe to the carburetor, a device for making an explosive mixture of air and gasoline, or other vapor. The outlet port is connected to the exhaust pipe, which may be attached to a "muffler" to deaden

*Student's exposition.

the sound of the explosion. Finally, there must be an apparatus for exploding the gas in the cylinder at the proper time. There are various ways of accomplishing this, but at the present time electrical sparking systems are most in use. It is impossible, in so brief a paper, to give an adequate idea of these complex systems: it will be enough for our purposes to know that when the piston head is near the top of the cylinder an electric spark, or series of sparks, is made to pass between two insulated points within the cylinder and thus cause an explosion.

In the four-cycle type of engine the inlet and exhaust ports are near the top of the cylinder. On the first downward stroke of the piston a partial vacuum is created, and this serves to draw into the cylinder, through the carburetor and an inlet port, a portion of the explosive mixture. The inlet port is fitted with a valve, operated automatically by the partial vacuum or mechanically by means of a cam attached to the crank shaft. When the piston reaches the lower end of this first stroke the inlet valve is closed, and the piston then starts upward on its second, or compression, stroke, compressing the gas that has been admitted into the cylinder. Just before it reaches the top of this stroke an electrical contact is made, which causes a spark to pass between the two insulated points inside the cylinder and ignite the charge of compressed gas. By the time the gas is thoroughly ignited the piston, which has started downward on its third stroke, is ready to be driven ahead by the rapidly expanding gases. As the piston reaches the bottom of its third stroke the valve on the outlet port is opened by a cam, and the burned gases begin to rush out. The piston then starts upward on the fourth, and last, stroke of the cycle, driving the exhaust gases before it. When the piston reaches the top of this stroke the exhaust valve is closed, and the cycle is complete.

Thus it may be seen that one cycle requires four strokes of the piston, or two revolutions of the crank shaft, for its completion. And it follows from this that all of the cams operating the inlet and exhaust valves and the "spark timer," or "commutator" (which regulates the number of sparks in a given length of time), have to be revolved at just half the speed of the crank shaft in order that they may act only once in every two revolutions of the

shaft. The speed of the engine is regulated by means of the amount of gas which is allowed to enter the cylinder, and by the rapidity with which one ignition spark succeeds another.

The two-cycle engine is a much simpler piece of machinery than the four-cycle engine; for the cams, shafts, gears, etc., necessary to operate the valves on the latter make it somewhat complicated. No valves are used on the two-cycle engine, their duty being performed by the piston as it covers or uncovers the ports—which are placed near the bottom of the cylinder. The speed of this engine is regulated by the same means as those employed in the four-cycle type.

Again let us start with the piston at the top, or closed end, of the cylinder, but this time just as the explosion occurs. The piston is driven downward by the expanding gases until, when nearly at the bottom of its stroke, it uncovers the exhaust port, through which the gases immediately seek an outlet. As the piston goes on to finish its stroke it uncovers the inlet port, and the compressed explosive mixture which was drawn into the gas-tight crank case, or portion below the piston, on the previous upward stroke, is forced into the cylinder and drives out the exhaust gases. The piston then starts on its second stroke, covering the ports and compressing the gas in front of it. Meanwhile a partial vacuum is formed in the crank case, and this draws another charge of the explosive mixture from the carburetor. Just before the top of the stroke is reached a spark occurs in the cylinder and an explosion takes place, thus completing the cycle.

The gas engine is not quite the simple machine that I have tried to make it appear. The ignition systems, the arrangements made for cooling the cylinder, the lubricating devices, the delicate adjustments of the carburetor, etc., make the individual engine a thing to be carefully examined and studied. There are many different styles of engines, fitted with a great variety of appliances and adapted to various uses, so that it is manifestly impossible to describe all by describing one. But with one exception (an engine in which the fixed cylinder-head is replaced by a second piston so that the explosion drives the pistons in opposite directions), the essential parts of a gas engine are those I have indicated, and it works in the way I have attempted to explain.

Corporations and the Nation*

The Nation has no peculiar relation to corporations created by the States. It can deal with them only as it can deal with unincorporated associations, partnerships, and individuals. Incorporation gives a privilege. The power which gives it may reserve the right to regulate its enjoyment, that is, the conduct of the association so privileged. In the nature of things, such right can be reserved only in the grant of the privilege and only by the grantor. The fact that an association of men is incorporated by one State cannot be made the basis of regulation by any other power. Incorporation under the laws of one or more States of the Union, gives no basis for control or regulation by the United States. The basis for Federal action must be found outside of the fact of such incorporation in something which, regardless of incorporation, brings the association within the field of Federal jurisdiction, under the provisions of the Constitution. State incorporation gives neither a ground for, nor a shield against, Federal interference.

If a partnership runs a stage between two villages in Vermont, its business being confined to that State, even the most advanced advocate of centralization will admit that its business cannot be regulated by Congress. If the partnership is changed into a corporation, or, in other words, if the same association of individuals is incorporated by the State of Vermont, the business being limited as before, the corporation, equally with the previous partnership, is beyond the reach of congressional regulation. The power of Congress is unaffected by incorporation.

Substitute for the two villages in Vermont, two villages, one of which is in Vermont, and the other across the Connecticut River, in New Hampshire, so that the business is interstate transportation. Then such business undoubtedly may be regulated by Congress under its power to regulate interstate commerce. And this is equally so while the individuals who carry it on remain a mere partnership and after they have become a corporation. Regulation may be applied to the business because of its character. The

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*Thomas Thacher, in the *Yale Law Journal*.

legal character of the association, the fact that it is or is not incorporated, in no way affects the question.

Suppose a further change is made, and the business of the association is both carriage between two villages in Vermont and carriage between two villages one in Vermont and one in New Hampshire. Business of the former kind is outside of the power of Federal regulation; business of the latter kind is within such power. The one kind of business may and the other may not be regulated by Congress. The association generally is not subject to such regulation, but only the interstate business which it does. The fact that the same body of men carry on both kinds of business cannot extend the power of Congress; and the power is precisely the same, whether they are associated as a partnership or as a State corporation. That part of the business which is within the definition of interstate commerce, is subject to regulation under the powers referred to; the rest of the business is not. The association may be regulated with respect to its interstate business, but only with respect to such business. Whether it is incorporated or not, whatever it does is free from, or subject to, Federal regulation, according as what it does is without or within the field of interstate commerce.

The Interstate Commerce Act in no sense attempts to regulate corporations; it regulates commerce only. It has lately been extended so as to cover express business. Some of the express companies are incorporated; some of the important ones are not.

The Anti-Trust Act of 1890 does not mention corporations, except in declaring that the word *person*, as therein used, includes "corporations." It prohibits certain doings—if the word "certain" may be used, though it is still uncertain what the prohibited doings are. It applies whether the doers are corporations or natural persons. It is the character of the business, not the character of those who do it, which gives to Congress the right to regulate it, and is to be considered in any proceeding under the Act.

When individuals are more frequently prosecuted under these acts, it will be more generally realized that they are not based upon any peculiar relation of the Nation to corporations, but upon the power of Congress to regulate interstate and foreign commerce by whomsoever carried on.

In the proposals for Federal regulation of corporations, it is sometimes urged that corporations are peculiarly subject to State regulations, because of the franchises which they enjoy. The State by which a franchise is granted may regulate the use of such franchises, if this right is reserved in the grant. But no other sovereignty can base a right of regulation upon such grant or such reservation therein. Whether a corporation enjoys only the franchise of corporate being—as is true of all industrial corporations—or enjoys, in addition to such franchise, a prerogative franchise such as that of maintaining and operating a railroad, the fact that it enjoys such franchise or franchises by grant from one or more of the States, gives no basis whatever for regulation of its business by the Federal Government.

With reference to the Federal Government, then, corporations created by the States stand upon the same footing as natural persons; if their business may be regulated, it is because of the character of the business, because such business—by whomsoever it may be carried on—is of the kind which is subjected to Federal regulation by the Constitution.

All this is quite obvious; but the obvious is often overlooked. Argument is unnecessary. Reference to authorities would be a waste of effort. It needs only to be pointed out. That it is overlooked is shown by much of the talk upon many legislative suggestions which are heard in these days.

The conclusions from what has been pointed out are both restrictive and expansive. Limitations are seen to lie in the way of some legislative measures proposed. But on the other hand, it equally appears that some proposals should be broadened. If there is any reason for any suggested form of regulation as applied to business done by corporations, there must be the same reason for regulation of like business done by individuals, partnerships, and unincorporated associations. Since the power of the Nation depends in no way upon incorporation, incorporation neither extends nor limits the power. Since it is the character of the business and not the legal character of the agency by which it is done which gives Congress its right of regulation, the legal character of the agency does not limit the power of Congress in its

regulation of the business. Nor does it appear that there can be any difference in expediency, whether the agency is incorporated or not. The regulations which seem wise with respect to the business should not, therefore, be limited in their application to incorporated bodies. They should be general—as are the regulations of the Anti-Trust Act and the Interstate Commerce Act—applying to the doings of individuals and unincorporated associations in like manner as to those of corporations. And the propriety of their enactment should be tested by the thought that they must, in reason, be made so to apply.

There are doubtless those who think—without much thinking—that to draw the line in such matters between corporations and agencies unincorporated, is simply to distinguish between things large and small. But this is a mistake. A partnership which becomes incorporate gains nothing in size or power. On the other hand, there are associations unincorporated which are larger and stronger than all but the largest corporations. Several important combinations have been organized lately by mere agreement, and the express companies give examples of association on a large scale without incorporation. If regulations are to be adopted as to any business, there would seem to be no reason why persons doing such business as individuals, or in unincorporated associations, should find themselves outside of their reach. Indeed, it would seem that incorporation cannot properly be made a basis of differentiation or of classification in any enactment by the Nation, unless it would cut free from the rule of equality of burden which is imposed upon the States by the Federal Constitution.

Edgar Allan Poe*

Edgar Allan Poe was born, the second of three children, at Boston, January 19, 1809. His father was a Baltimorean, the son of a Revolutionary patriot possibly of Irish descent. His mother was of English birth. Both were members of a theatrical company then playing at Boston. Nearly three years later, by the death of the parents in Virginia, the children were left orphans.

*Alphonso G. Newcomer. Reprinted by permission of Scott, Foresman and Co.

Edgar was adopted by Mr. John Allan, a Scotchman who had made a fortune in Richmond, Virginia, in the tobacco trade. He was brought up in luxury, a much-spoiled child—petted for his beauty and precocity, amusing himself with dogs and ponies at summer resorts, and declaiming on the table for Mr. Allan's guests while they drank their wine. In his seventh year he was taken to England and put into school in a London suburb, an experience which afterwards furnished a setting for the story of *William Wilson*. Five years later he returned with his adoptive parents to Richmond. At the age of seventeen, a proud, reserved, half-melancholy and wholly self-willed youth, he entered the University of Virginia. There he studied the ancient and modern languages and practiced athletics and the several "gentlemanly" forms of dissipation. He was withdrawn by Mr. Allan for incurring gambling debts. From the tedious routine of Mr. Allan's counting-room he ran away to Boston, published there an anonymous little volume of forty pages—the Byronic *Tamerlane and Other Poems* (1827)—and enlisted in the army under an assumed name.[1] Poe afterwards allowed the story to be circulated that during this period he had gone abroad to assist the Greeks in their struggle for liberty, like Byron, and that he had spent part of the time in St. Petersburg. Mr. Allan, discovering his whereabouts, secured his discharge from the army and obtained his appointment as a cadet to West Point. A few months of the severe discipline of that school, however, sufficed for Poe's restless nature, and it is probable that he deliberately brought upon himself the dismissal which followed. He found himself adrift, at the age of twenty-two, with nothing further to expect from Mr. Allan.

Literature presented itself as his most natural vocation. Poe had, indeed, begun to take himself very seriously as a poet before he was twenty, and he had published a second volume at Baltimore while waiting for his cadetship. This volume contained, in addition to a revision of the ambitious *Tamerlane* and some minor poems, the mystical and scarcely intelligible "Al Aaraaf." A second edition, issued at New York shortly after his expulsion from West Point, contained several new poems of real promise,

[1]Woodbury's *Poe*, American Men of Letters Series.

like "Israfel" and "To Helen." But poverty and the maturing of his powers conspired to turn his attention to prose, and his first success of note was made through that medium. In 1833 a Baltimore weekly, *The Saturday Visitor*, offered a prize of one hundred dollars for the best prose tale submitted. Poe, then in desperate straits, submitted half a dozen. His *MS. Found in a Bottle* was awarded the first prize. John P. Kennedy, the novelist, who was one of the judges, took a kindly interest in the author, securing him some work in journalism, and probably providing even food and clothing. Poe was then living at Baltimore with his aunt, Mrs. Clemm, and her daughter Virginia. Two years later he went to Richmond to assist in editing the *Southern Literary Messenger*, and about the same time married Virginia Clemm. She was a mere child, scarcely fourteen, but Poe, whose reverence for women was his noblest trait, loved and cared for her devotedly through all the vicissitudes of poverty and ill health that ensued, until her death eleven years later, a short time before his own. The inspiration of some of his finest creations—the child lovers of "Eleonora," for instance—is to be found in this tender and ill-fated attachment.

The story of Poe, first and last, is a melancholy one—a story of benefits received but ill-requited, of endeavor constantly self thwarted, and of physical and moral weaknesses inadequately coped with. He never had any measure of real prosperity. His willful and erratic temperament, further perverted by his more or less frequent yielding to the temptations of liquor and opium, made any continued effort impossible. One career after another was opened to him only to be closed again; one enterprise after another was undertaken only to fail or be abandoned. The eighteen months at Richmond were followed by seven years at Philadelphia, where he edited successively *The Gentleman's Magazine* and *Graham's Magazine*. In the editorship of the latter he was succeeded by Rufus W. Griswold, who became, after Poe's death, his hostile biographer. This was the period of his greatest productiveness. In 1838 was published *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*, a fantastic and horrible but professedly realistic sea tale. In 1839 appeared *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*. Through this

period, too, must have been written many of the poems that were published in the volume of 1845, *The Raven and Other Poems.* In 1844 he went to New York, and finally took up his residence in a cottage at Fordham, on the outskirts of the city. There, in January, 1847, his wife died, and he followed her body to the grave wrapped in the military cloak that had been her last coverlet against the winter's cold. A severe illness succeeded, from which he recovered physically; but the Poe of the remaining two years was scarcely the same man—the wreck of a wreck, though able yet to compose such monodies of madness as "Eureka" and "The Bells" and "Ulalume." The end came tragically. He was returning to New York from a visit to Richmond in the autumn of 1849, when chance brought him and election day together in the city of Baltimore. He was found in an election booth, intoxicated, or drugged, or both, and was taken to a hospital where he died in a delirium several days later.

Immediately men's fancies began to play with the memory of the erratic genius, and a process of myth-making began which has gone on for half a century, transforming Poe into a kind of superhuman creature, angelic or diabolic according to the prejudices of the myth-maker. The mere seeker for facts is everywhere met by such maundering as that of Griswold, who, shortly after Poe's death, described him as one who "would walk the streets, in madness or melancholy, with lips moving in indistinct curses, or with eyes upturned in passionate prayer," or who, "with his glances introverted to a heart gnawed with anguish, and with a face shrouded in gloom, would brave the wildest storms, and all night, with drenched garments and arms beating the winds and rains would speak as if to spirits that at such times only could be evoked by him from the Aidenn." It is almost impossible now to get behind this veil of tradition and see the man Poe face to face as his fellows saw him, a desperate struggler for his daily bread. Even with the clearest light, so complex a character as his would be hard to analyze and still harder to judge. We must admit that, with all his genius, he was morally delinquent on many counts. He lacked a fine sense of honor. He had no adequate conception of a man's duties either to himself or to his fellows, and though many

stood ready to befriend him, he lived in spiritual solitude, the friend of no man. He did not exactly lack will, as has been so often said, for he acted vigorously through his short life; but he seemed not to recognize any specific moral ends toward which a man should bend his activity. He was full of contradictions. Though possessed of a keen, cool, logical mind, he was always toying with speculations that sober science repudiates. His exalted dreams of purity and goodness were in strong contrast to the perversity of his deeds. It is doubtful whether he knew the meaning of the word morality, and the judge of his character must feel that if there be such a thing as a man who can do evil deeds without being himself evil, Poe was that man. At any rate, between his admirers and his detractors one may most safely take the middle ground that his was not a case for either praise or blame, but only pity. Heredity and training were against him, the very conditions of American life were adverse, and the tragedy of his career is best remembered in sorrow. After all, his works are our permanent possession, and the highest of them were touched only with the misery and pathos of his life, never with its dishonor.

Poe's work as a journalist and critic does not call for much comment. In the circle of his authority he came to be well known and feared; and the independence of his views and his frankness in expressing them did a real service to the profession of literary criticism in America, which had degenerated into mere idle compliment and mutual admiration. But his critical method was not the method of calm inquiry which sets up standards and judges fearlessly and honestly by them. He was fearless enough, but unfair. He had critical acumen and exquisite literary sensibilities, and so long as he depended on these he did well. He knew the marks of genius; a Tennyson or a Hawthorne, even though unknown to fame, was immediately known to Poe. But his foolish prejudices and personal jealousies often rendered his judgments worthless. A man who could write an article on *Longfellow and Other Plagiarists* was not likely to carry with him either sympathy or conviction. He was too extravagant and too fond of the sensational. The charge of literary theft in particular he liked to make, though he rarely proved anything more than a measure of

indebtedness which the authors themselves would have been ready to acknowledge. Efforts have since been made to show that he was himself not innocent of plagiarism. But these efforts have succeeded scarcely better than his own. That he should have gone to Macaulay's *Warren Hastings* instead of to an encyclopedia for a description of the holy city of Benares, which he needed in his *Tale of the Ragged Mountains,* counts for little. And as for the many striking parallels between his poems and those of a certain Dr. Chivers, of Georgia,[1] the only conclusion an impartial student can reach is that Chivers owed far more to Poe than Poe ever owed to Chivers. Probably Poe has been the least "influenced" of all melodious poets since Spenser.

Poe's best criticisms of a general nature are his essays on *The Poetic Principle* and *The Philosophy of Composition,* though both must be read guardedly. One of the theories laid down in the first, that there can be no such thing as a long poem, may be supported only by assuming that there is no poetry but lyrical or emotional poetry. The second essay is occupied with an explanation of the mechanical way in which "The Raven" was constructed—a very entertaining explanation, but one that no one who knows Poe or who knows poetry will accept as final. Still, Poe's contributions to the literature of aesthetics and criticism are very considerable. On the other hand, his so-called scientific or philosophical works, "Eureka" and the rest, are worthless. He liked to make a great show of learning by all sorts of obscure references, but he had little real scholarship, and though he was a subtle analyst he was not a profound reasoner. Of course, his real greatness lay in his imaginative work—his tales and his poems.

The tales may be said to constitute a distinct addition to the world's literature. From time immemorial there have been tales in prose and in verse, tales legendary, romantic, and humorous, but never any quite like Poe's. How difficult it is to find any derivative for them may be seen from the fact that the writers most commonly mentioned as having given some direction to Poe's genius are Defoe and Bulwer! Godwin and the German Hoffmann would be nearer the mark, yet very distant still. *Bizarre* and

[1] Joel Benton: *In the Poe Circle.*

terrific are the words which Kennedy in his helplessness applies to the tales; and the words represent fairly the first impression which they will always make, for the two qualities of strangeness and power are to be found in nearly all. A few are grotesque only, but they are among the weakest and are seldom read. Perhaps we may venture to divide the important ones, according to their dominant motives, into analytical tales, allegorical or moral tales, and tales of the supernatural.

The analytical tales are tales embracing situations that call for the acutest exercise of the human reason—the unraveling of a mystery, the detection of some obscure law of nature, or the achievement of some difficult feat by the resources of science. *The Gold-Bug* is one of the best of this type. It has in it a strong element of adventure, but that Poe's chief interest did not lie in this is shown by the fact that the climax of the story is not the finding of Captain Kidd's treasure, but the deciphering of the cryptogram through which the treasure was found. Other writers of such stories, Jules Verne, for instance, in his *Journey to the Center of the Earth*, invert this order. *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, *The Mystery of Marie Rogêt*, and *The Purloined Letter* are all what we should call "detective stories," and are the forerunners of many stories of their kind from sensational novels up to novels of elaborate mystery and skill like Wilkie Collins's *Moonstone*. To be convinced of Poe's influence in this field one needs only to read his *Purloined Letter* and then *A Scandal in Bohemia* in Dr. Conan Doyle's *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. Several of the analytical tales have subsidiary elements of interest, notably horror in the baboon murderer of the Rue Morgue, an element which Mr. Kipling, with questionable art, has ventured to make the sole theme of his gruesome *Bimi*. Among the tales of adventure with a background of semi-scientific speculation are *Hans Pfall* (the story of a trip to the moon), *MS Found in a Bottle*, and *A Descent into the Maelstrom*. In the two latter, however, the interest of mere ingenuity is overshadowed by the interest of the narratives themselves, enriched, as they are, with all the resources of Poe's imagination. It may well be that the wild fancy of a descent into the maelstrom grew primarily out of a mathe-

matical theorem concerning the action of cylinders in a vortex, but the qualities that give that tale its distinction and its power are higher than this. It is in the descriptive passages, where subtlety of analysis gives way before the splendor and majesty of the pictured scenes, that one must look to find the real genius of Poe.

The allegorical tales, comparatively few in number, are weakened in point of art by their moral intent. *William Wilson* is an allegory of the twofold nature of man—of the conflict between the upward tendency to good and the downward tendency to evil. Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is another story with the same theme. But *William Wilson*, though written in a flowing style, and with patient, deliberate art, is not a great tale. The moral is crystallized, but not held in solution. What should be the undermeaning is on the surface: the tale yields to the homily. We note, too, an incongruous mixture of things real and things unreal. The details of the background are faithfully given only to be completely lost sight of again: they are not organic. Hence the story, as a story, fails. *The Black Cat* is much better and is, indeed, one of Poe's best-known tales. It is possible to read it and scarcely perceive the underlying motive of the accusing conscience. Its only weak point is one common to all the tales—a lack of characterization. Poe's characters are never real human beings, and no matter what atrocities they commit or what agonies they suffer, we feel neither disgust nor sympathy; we are moved purely by the abstract horror of the situation. Poe lacked the tear-compelling power which even a caricaturist like Dickens possessed. But for naked horror *The Black Cat* is hardly to be surpassed. It certainly produces an effect, and that, Poe declared, was the main object in most of his tales. *The Man of the Crowd* and *The Tell-Tale Heart* are also tales of conscience, though less distinctly allegorical. *The Masque of the Red Death* is allegorical, but without moral significance—the fear it symbolizes is purely physical. But this is another of Poe's most successful fantasies, at once gorgeous and spectral, ridiculously impossible yet awfully real.

In these several forms of narrative—the detective story, the tale of pseudo-science, the moral allegory—Poe's influence has been

both wide and deep. But there is another domain in which his unique genius found a still higher expression and in which he has had no successful imitators. This is the domain of the supernatural. Here belong the tales of *Berenice*, *Morella*, *Shadow*, Poe's own favorite *Ligeia*, and that tale which critical opinion commonly ranks highest—*The Fall of the House of Usher*. The motive of the last two is one of the most fantastic and terrible in the field of romance. It is the idea, which seems to have been almost a hallucination with Poe, of the possible life of the spirit, that is, of the thinking, sentient part of a man, after the death of the body—not immortality, be it understood, but a temporary prolonging of spirit life by sheer power of will. Yet the motive, gruesome as it is, is saved by the cunning of the artist from being repulsive or ridiculous; for Poe builds up, with unerring skill, his effects of transcendent beauty and at the same time transcendent horror and awe. It would be almost as difficult to say how the effects are produced as it would be to say why a violin fantasia has the power to move or fascinate, but the perfection of the art that produces them is no more to be questioned in the one case than in the other.

The deficiencies of the tales we must grant, though we need not hold the deficiencies to be defects. They contain nothing refreshing, nothing morally uplifting or sweetly humanizing. The sunshine is not the broad sunshine of the fields—it comes sifted through dense foliage or colored glass. The winds blow from caverns and vaulted tombs. The color on the cheek is hectic, the mirth is hysterical. Everywhere are grief and madness, disease and death. But the aesthetic passion, which supplied in Poe the place of the ethic passion, works a transfiguration, making beauty even out of ghastliness and ugliness. Two or three impressions, indeed, must be left abidingly upon every reader of Poe's prose. First, there is the charm of the language itself, sometimes swift and strong, as in the description of the setting sun that, "a dim, silver-like rim alone, rushed down the unfathomable ocean," sometimes lyric in its melody, as in the description of "Venice, a star-beloved Elysium of the sea, the wide windows of whose Palladian palaces look down with a deep and bitter meaning upon the secrets of her silent

waters." With this goes the fascination of the vivid scenes, ranging from terror to beauty and sublimity. What a picture is that of the spectral crew: "their knees trembled with infirmity; their shoulders were bent double with decrepitude; their shriveled skins rattled in the wind; their voices were low, tremulous, and broken; their eyes glistened with the rheum of years; and their gray hairs streamed terribly in the tempest." Or who that has once seen in imagination ever forgets the "Valley of the Many-Colored Grass," the noble hall "in a dim city called Ptolemais," the "black and lurid tarn that lay in unruffled luster" by the melancholy house of Usher? Lastly, there is the magic touch, the necromancer's wand, which removes all these scenes into the uncharted realm of the supernatural and invests them with a kind of sacred awe, so that one who has wandered for an hour in the country of Poe comes back to this everyday world like a dreamer and an alien.

The poetry of Poe's mature years has the same attributes, only it is, as poetry should be, still more ethereal. If we had not come to demand so much of poetry, there could be little hesitation in ranking Poe's with the very greatest in any language. But cultivated readers have fallen into the habit of searching beneath emotions for moral and intellectual stimulus. They want, in Matthew Arnold's phrase, a "criticism of life," and failing to find that, they are dissatisfied. Now that, Poe cannot be said to afford—life as we know it he scarcely touches at all. But youth, that is always a poet, and that knows little of definitions, reads Poe and says, "This is pure poetry." And the test should satisfy us about Poe and make us doubt our definitions. Beyond all question, whatever Poe lacked—and he lacked many things—he possessed the two fundamental attributes of a poet, melody and imagination, in a supreme degree. They are attributes, too, that speak for themselves requiring no proof or argument. When "The Raven" was published in N. P. Willis's *Evening Mirror* in January, 1845, America knew for a certainty that English literature had another poet to reckon with. "The Raven" immediately became, and remains, one of the most widely known of English poems; it can be mentioned anywhere without apology or explanation, and there is scarcely a lover of melodious verse who cannot repeat many of its lines and

stanzas. Strange it seems that Poe's poetic genius should ever require vindication.

It is true, the product is meager. "The Raven," "The Bells," "Ulalume," "Annabel Lee," "The Haunted Palace," "The Conqueror Worm," "Israfel," "To Helen," "To One in Paradise," "The City in the Sea," one can almost count on the fingers his great poems. But that is true of many notable poets, even where the product is large. Poe's trash (certain stanzas, for instance, in "For Annie") is very sorry trash, but there is not a great deal of it, and there is practically no mediocre verse. What is good touches the high-water mark of excellence.

And its quality is unmistakable. Its appeal is to the sentiment of Beauty—the one appeal which, according to Poe's theory, is the final justification of any poem. Language is made to yield its utmost of melody. From words, even from letters, one might say—for Poe actually fabricated words whose sounds would suit his purpose—effects were wrested such as had never been wrested before.

> The skies they were ashen and sober;
> The leaves they were crispèd and sear—
> The leaves they were withering and sear—
> It was night in the lonesome October
> Of my most immemorial year;
> It was hard by the dim lake of Auber,
> In the misty mid-region of Weir—
> It was down by the dank tarn of Auber,
> In the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

This is haunting music, though here again, as in the tales, if we seek to know precisely how the effect is secured, we are baffled. The ordinary devices of alliteration, refrains, and repetends, are freely used, but no mere resort to those devices can parallel the effect. The truth is, the verse is not only haunting, but haunted. In it is the strange, unearthly imagery, and over it is the spectral light, that only Poe's imagination could create. To a beauty of language, by its very nature as indescribable as music, is added a weird enchantment of scene that vanishes before any attempt to reclothe it in other words. Analysis and criticism are helpless before this final achievement of Poe's art—the creation of that

"supernal loveliness" which, he declared, it is the struggle of all fit souls to apprehend.

Beyond this we may scarcely go. There are dark hints of other things in Poe's poetry. The Raven of his dreams is, in the words of Mr. Stedman, "an emblem of the Irreparable, the guardian of pitiless memories." The Haunted Palace and the Conqueror Worm have a direct and almost frightful allegorical significance. And what music may not come from the lute of Israfel, what hopes are not barred by the legended tomb of Ulalume? But we gain little from the study of these things, indeed we almost resent any covert significance. For of Poe's poetry, as of his highest prose, it must be said that it makes almost no moral appeal. Nothing is conceived on a moral plane. He has nothing to teach us—no mission, no message. But the sounds and the visions remain, the poet's mastery over the secrets of the terrible, the mysterious, the sublime, and the beautiful; and we may well rest content to listen without questions to the wild measures of Israfel's lute, to gaze awe-stricken upon the City in the Sea, or to pass speechless by the dim lake of Auber and through the ghoul-haunted woodland of Weir.

Thus Poe's genius stands out, alone and incommensurable, like one of those solemn mountain peaks which, in Arnold's fine phrase,

> but to the stars are known,
> But to the stars and the cold lunar beams.

Only two other American writers, Longfellow and Hawthorne, have brought to their work the same kind of consecration, the same steadfast devotion to the principles of pure art; and only one of these was the equal of Poe in original power. But even Hawthorne, with all his originality, is a fairly deducible product from the inheritance to which he was born and the conditions among which he lived. Poe's genius was really of no land or clime. Some sort of prototype, indeed, might be found in Coleridge, in reading whose poetry Poe declared that he trembled "like one who stands upon a volcano, conscious, from the very darkness bursting from the crater, of the fire and the light that are weltering below." But Poe was Poe. We may account for Longfellow, for Hawthorne, for Emerson; but the individual note, the "inexpressible monad"

which evolutionary science itself as yet fails to account for, was peculiarly strong in Poe, and we are virtually compelled to leave him underived. Abroad he has long been considered as a creative writer of the first rank. It is to the shame of Americans that they have seldom been able to take quite his full measure; but our best critics have been instinctively attracted to him, and it is worthy of note that his works have lately been honored with a scholarly and fairly definitive critical edition—an honor which, not to consider statesmen, like Franklin, or the early historians and theologians, has fallen to no other American man of letters.[1]

A Plea for Argumentation*

"Why should women be required to take argumentation? What good does it do them to read a mass of material on some question of only temporary or local importance, and work it into forensic form? Would not the time be better spent on French, or music, or literature—or something that contributes to general culture? What sufficient excuse can there be for compelling girls to argue?"

This is an old refrain, and is persistently repeated—so persistently, indeed, that at many women's colleges the course in argumentation has disappeared from the list of requirements for a degree. It is not surprising that objection is made to it: not all students are prejudiced in favor of hard studies, and this course is by no means the least troublesome in the college curriculum. We agree, moreover, that there is little sense in compelling girls to argue, for argument's sake. But there is some excuse for the course, nevertheless, and we will endeavor to make clear what it is.

In order to discover what good it does a woman to write briefs and forensics, we must see in what the work consists, and what qualities of mind are needed for its successful accomplishment.

The first thing necessary in preparing an argument is to get a complete grasp of one's subject. One must determine with perfect definiteness and accuracy all that is meant by each of the words in which his proposition is phrased. After defining terms with

*A Student's argument.

care, one wonders, not infrequently, if he has ever before in his life really comprehended the full meaning of an English sentence—so great is the precision, so nice the distinction, required in this part of the work.

The next thing, after one has settled clearly what the question is about, is to go through a mass of material more or less closely related to the matter in hand, and select from it just such facts and theories as will really go to prove, or to strengthen, one side of the case. Due attention must at the same time be given to the points in which lies the strength of one's opponent, and bits of proof must be picked out to balance or to weaken each piece of evidence he may bring forward. Here there is demand for the most careful discrimination; in this part of the work one must stick resolutely to the point, rejecting all except the telling facts, however interesting and worthy of attention the useless ones may be in themselves. He who says all that applies to the question at issue, and no more, is the one whose work has the greatest force and weight.

Next, the chosen material must be classified and put in order. There are naturally certain broad divisions of the proof, and under these narrower ones, and narrower. Each smallest bit of fact has a place of its own, and must be put into it, in order that it may do its proper share of work: its relation to every other fact must be decided, and its place in the whole structure must correspond to this relation. The whole proof must be so organized as to be at once logical, coherent, and forcible. Skillfully one must lead his readers on, from lesser things to greater, quietly advancing step by step until he can say: "See, I have proved this to be true, and this and this—and now the whole is established." In our college forensics it is not the persuasiveness of the language, but the skillful exposition of facts in logical order, that makes good argument. Anyone who has an orderly mind will not fare ill in the class in argumentation.

Accuracy, discrimination, orderliness—are not these worth teaching, even to women? Are not women, more than men, accused of jumping at hasty conclusions, of saying at random all that comes into their heads, and of jumbling ideas into an unintelligible mixture

of sense and nonsense? It would seem that few courses of study could answer their needs better than this very bugbear of which we are speaking. Today, women are expected to talk, and to talk with sense and force. It is easy enough for them to learn things to talk about, for their perception is keen and their memory good. Their great need is of logical thinking and clear expression. The actual questions that a girl reads up for argumentation add little, usually, to her stock of information; but the lesson in grasping the question, and in selecting, classifying, and organizing material, is one so much needed that it makes of argumentation a "culture" course in a far stricter sense than are courses in French, music, and literature. Whenever a woman prepares a forensic she is truly cultivating her mind. She is learning the value of making orderly disposition of material in the pigeonholes of her own brain, where she can find it ready to be put into effective use at any moment. With more of mental discipline she can do with less of concrete fact—and the time spent on forensic work is, therefore, not ill-spent. The course in argumentation has an excuse for existing; and women who would be reasonable should take up the study feeling not ill-treated, but privileged.

Letter on Impressment*

Department of State
Washington, August 8, 1842

My Lord: We have had several conversations on the subject of impressment, but I do not understand that your lordship has instructions from your government to negotiate upon it, nor does the government of the United States see any utility in opening such negotiation, unless the British government is prepared to renounce the practice in all future wars.

No cause had produced to so great an extent, and for so long a period, disturbing and irritating influences on the political relations of the United States and England, as the impressment of seamen by British cruisers from American merchant vessels.

*Daniel Webster to Lord Ashburton.

From the commencement of the French Revolution to the breaking out of the war between the two countries in 1812 hardly a year elapsed without loud complaint and earnest remonstrance. A deep feeling of opposition to the right claimed and to the practice exercised under it, and not unfrequently exercised without the least regard to what justice and humanity would have dictated, even if the right itself had been admitted, took possession of the public mind of America, and this feeling, it is well known, co-operated most powerfully with other causes to produce the state of hostilities which ensued.

At different periods, both before and since the war, negotiations have taken place between the two governments, with the hope of finding some means of quieting these complaints. At some times, the effectual abolition of the practice has been requested and treated of; at other times, its temporary suspension; and at other times again, the limitation of its exercise, and some security against its enormous abuses.

A common destiny has attended these efforts; they have all failed. The question stands at this moment where it stood fifty years ago. The nearest approach to a settlement was a convention proposed in 1803, and which had come to the point of signature, when it was broken off in consequence of the British government insisting that the *narrow seas* should be expressly excepted out of the sphere over which the contemplated stipulation against impressment should extend. The American minister, Mr. King, regarded this exception as quite inadmissible, and chose rather to abandon the negotiation than to acquiesce in the doctrine which it proposed to establish.

England asserts the right of impressing British subjects, in time of war, out of neutral merchant vessels, and of deciding by her visiting officers who, among the crews of such merchant vessels, are British subjects. She asserts this as a legal exercise of the prerogative of the crown; which prerogative is alleged to be founded on the English law of perpetual and indissoluble allegiance of the subject, and his obligation under all circumstances, and for his whole life, to render military service to the crown whenever required.

The statement, made in the words of eminent British jurists, shows at once that the English claim is far broader than the basis of platform on which it is raised. The law relied on is English law; the obligations insisted on are obligations existing between the crown of England and its subjects. This law and these obligations, it is admitted, may be such as England may choose they shall be. But then they must be confined to the parties. Impressment of seamen out of and beyond English territory, and from on board the ships of other nations, is an interference with the rights of other nations; it is further, therefore, than English prerogative can legally extend; and is nothing but an attempt to enforce the peculiar law of England beyond the dominions and jurisdiction of the crown. The claim asserts an extra-territorial authority for the law of British prerogative, and assumes to exercise this extra-territorial authority to the manifest injury and annoyance of the citizens and subjects of other states, on board their own vessels, on the high seas.

Every merchant vessel on these is rightfully considered as part of the territory of the country to which it belongs. The entry, therefore, into such vessel, being neutral, by a belligerent, is an act of force, and is, *prima facie*, a wrong, a trespass, which can be justified only when done for some purpose allowed to form a sufficient justification by the law of nations. But a British cruiser enters an American merchant vessel in order to take therefrom supposed British subjects; offering no justification, therefore, under the law of nations, but claiming the right under the law of England respecting the king's prerogative. This cannot be defended. English soil, English territory, English jurisdiction, is the appropriate sphere for the operation of English law. The ocean is the sphere of the law of nations; and any merchant vessel on the seas is by that law under the protection of the laws of her own nation, and may claim immunity, unless in cases in which that law allows her to be entered or visited.

If this notion of perpetual allegiance, and the consequent power of the prerogative, were the law of the world; if it formed part of the conventional code of nations, and was usually practiced, like the right of visiting neutral ships for the purpose of discovering

and seizing enemy's property, then impressment might be defended as a common right, and there would be no remedy for the evil till the national code should be altered. But this is by no means the case. There is no such principle incorporated into the code of nations. The doctrine stands only as English law, not as a national law; and English law cannot be of force beyond English dominion. Whatever duties or relations that law creates between the sovereign and his subjects can be enforced and maintained only within the realm, or proper possessions or territory of the sovereign. There may be quite as just a prerogative right to the property of subjects as to their personal services, in an exigency of the state; but no government thinks of controlling by its own laws property of its subjects situated abroad; much less does any government think of entering the territory of another power for the purpose of seizing such property and applying it to its own uses. As laws, the prerogatives of the crown of England have no obligation on persons or property domiciled or situated abroad.

"When, therefore," says an authority, not unknown or unregarded on either side of the Atlantic, "we speak of the right of a state to bind its own native subjects everywhere, we speak only of its own claim and exercise of sovereignty over them when they return within its own territorial jurisdiction, and not of its right to compel or require obedience to such laws, on the part of other nations, within their own territorial sovereignty. On the contrary, every nation has an exclusive right to regulate persons and things within its own territory, according to its sovereign will and public polity."

The good sense of these principles, their remarkable pertinency to the subject now under consideration, and the extraordinary consequences resulting from the British doctrine, are signally manifested by that which we see taking place every day. England acknowledges herself overburdened with population of the poorer classes. Every instance of the emigration of persons of those classes is regarded by her as a benefit. England, therefore, encourages emigration; means are notoriously supplied to emigrants, to assist their conveyance, from public funds; and the New World, and most especially these United States, receive the many thou-

sands of her subjects thus ejected from the bosom of their native land by the necessities of their condition. They come away from poverty and distress in overcrowded cities, to seek employment, comfort, and new homes in a country of free institutions, possessed by a kindred race, speaking their own language, and having laws and usages in many respects like those to which they have been accustomed; and a country which, upon the whole, is found to possess more attractions for persons of their character and condition than any other on the face of the globe. It is stated that, in the quarter of the year ending with June last, more than twenty-six thousand emigrants left the single port of Liverpool for the United States, being four or five times as many as left the same port within the same period for the British colonies and all other parts of the world. Of these crowds of emigrants, many arrive in our cities in circumstances of great destitution, and the charities of the country, both public and private, are severely taxed to relieve their immediate wants. In time they mingle with the new community in which they find themselves and seek means of living. Some find employment in the cities, others go to the frontiers, to cultivate lands reclaimed from the forest; and a greater or less number of the residue, becoming in time naturalized citizens, enter into the merchant service under the flag of their adopted country.

Now, my lord, if war should break out between England and a European power, can anything be more unjust, anything more irreconcilable to the general sentiments of mankind, than that England should seek out these persons, thus encouraged by her and compelled by their own condition to leave their native homes, tear them away from their new employments, their new political relations, and their domestic connections, and force them to undergo the dangers and hardships of military service for a country which has thus ceased to be their own country? Certainly, certainly, my lord, there can be but one answer to this question. Is it not far more reasonable that England should either prevent such emigration of her subjects, or that, if she encourage and promote it, she should leave them, not to the embroilment of a double and contradictory allegiance, but to their own voluntary choice, to form such relations, political or social, as they see fit in the country where

they are to find their bread, and to the laws and institutions of which they are to look for defense and protection?

A question of such serious importance ought now to be put at rest. If the United States give shelter and protection to those whom the policy of England annually casts upon their shores; if, by the benign influences of their government and institutions, and by the happy condition of the country, those emigrants become raised from poverty to comfort, finding it easy even to become landholders, and being allowed to partake in the enjoyment of all civil rights; if all this may be done (and all this is done, under the countenance and encouragement of England herself), is it not high time, my lord, that, yielding that which had its origin in feudal ideas as inconsistent with the present state of society, and especially with the intercourse and relations existing between the Old World and the New, England should at length formally disclaim all rights to the services of such persons, and renounce all control over their conduct?

But impressment is subject to objections of a much wider range. If it could be justified in its application to those who are declared to be its only objects, it still remains true that, in its exercise, it touches the political rights of other governments, and endangers the security of their own native subjects, and citizens. The sovereignty of the state is concerned in maintaining its exclusive jurisdiction and possession over its merchant ships on the seas, except so far as the law of nations justifies intrusion upon that possession for special purposes; and all experience has shown that no member of a crew, wherever born, is safe against impressment when a ship is visited.

The evils and injuries resulting from the actual practice can hardly be overrated, and have ever proved themselves to be such as should lead to its relinquishment, even if it were founded in any defensible principle. The difficulty of discriminating between English subjects and American citizens has always been found to be great, even when an honest purpose of discrimination has existed. But the lieutenant of a man-of-war, having necessity for men, is apt to be a summary judge, and his decisions will be quite as significant of his own wants and his own power, as of the truth and justice

of the case. An extract from a letter of Mr. King, of the 13th of April, 1797, to the American secretary of state, shows something of the enormous extent of these wrongful seizures.

"Instead of a few, and these in many instances equivocal cases, I have," says he, "since the month of July past, made application for the discharge from British men-of-war of two hundred and seventy-one seamen, who, stating themselves to be Americans, have claimed my interference. Of this number, eighty-six have been ordered by the admiralty to be discharged, thirty-seven more have been detained as British subjects or as American volunteers, or for want of proof that they are Americans, and to my applications for the discharge of the remaining one hundred and forty-eight I have received no answer, the ships on board of which these seamen were detained having, in many instances, sailed before an examination was made in consequence of my application.

"It is certain that some of those who have applied to me are not American citizens, but the exceptions are, in my opinion, few, and the evidence, exclusive of certificates, has been such as, in most cases, to satisfy me that the applicants were real Americans, who have been forced into the British service, and who, with singular constancy, have generally persevered in refusing pay or bounty, though in some instances they have been in service more than two years."

But the injuries of impressment are by no means confined to its immediate subjects, or the individuals on whom it is practiced. Vessels suffer from the weakening of their crews, and voyages are often delayed, and not unfrequently broken up, by subtraction from the number of necessary hands by impressment. And what is of still greater and more general moment, the fear of impressment has been found to create great difficulty in obtaining sailors for the American merchant service in times of European war. Seafaring men, otherwise inclined to enter into that service, are, as experience has shown, deterred by the fear of finding themselves ere long in compulsory military service in British ships of war. Many instances have occurred, fully established in proof, in which raw seamen, natives of the United States, fresh from the fields of agriculture, entering for the first time on shipboard, have been impressed

before they made the land, placed on the decks of British men-of-war, and compelled to serve for years before they could obtain their release, or revisit their country and their homes. Such instances become known, and their effect in discouraging young men from engaging in the merchant service of their country can neither be doubted nor wondered at. More than all, my lord, the practice of impressment, whenever it has existed, has produced, not conciliation and good feeling, but resentment, exasperation, and animosity between the two great commercial countries of the world.

In the calm and quiet which have succeeded the late war, a condition so favorable for dispassionate consideration, England herself has evidently seen the harshness of impressment, even when exercised on seamen in her own merchant service, and she has adopted measures calculated, if not to renounce the power or to abolish the practice, yet at least to supersede its necessity by other means of manning the royal navy more compatible with justice and the rights of individuals, and far more conformable to the spirit and sentiments of the age.

Under these circumstances, the government of the United States has used the occasion of your lordship's pacific mission to review this whole subject, and to bring it to your notice, and that of your government. It has reflected on the past, pondered the condition of the present, and endeavored to anticipate so far as might be in its power, the probable future; and I am now to communicate to your lordship the result of these deliberations.

The American government, then, is prepared to say that the practice of impressing seamen from American vessels cannot hereafter be allowed to take place. That practice is founded on principles which it does not recognize, and is invariably attended by consequences so unjust, so injurious, and of such formidable magnitude, as cannot be submitted to.

In the early disputes between the two governments on this so long contested topic, the distinguished persons to whose hands were first entrusted the seals of this department, declared, that "the simplest rule will be, that the vessel being American shall be evidence that the seamen on board are such."

Fifty years' experience, the utter failure of many negotiations, and a careful reconsideration now had, of the whole subject, at a

moment when the passions are laid, and no present interest or emergency exists to bias the judgment, have fully convinced this government that this is not only the simplest and best, but the only rule, which can be adopted and observed, consistently with the rights and honor of the United States and the security of their citizens. That rule announces, therefore, what will hereafter be the principle maintained by their government. In every regularly documented American merchant vessel the crew who navigate it will find their protection in the flag which is over them.

This announcement is not made, my lord, to revive useless recollections of the past, nor to stir the embers from fires which have been, in a great degree, smothered by many years of peace. Far otherwise. Its purpose is to extinguish those fires effectually, before new incidents arise to fan them into flame. The communication is in the spirit of peace, and for the sake of peace, and springs from a deep and conscientious conviction that high interests of both nations require that this so long contested and controverted subject shall now be finally put to rest. I persuade myself that you will do justice to this frank and sincere avowal of motives, and that you will communicate your sentiments in this respect to your government.

This letter closes, my lord, on my part, our official correspondence; and I gladly use the occasion to offer you the assurance of my high and sincere regard.

Lord Ashburton, etc. Daniel Webster

Newport, Isle of Wight*

The Isle of Wight looks so insignificant on the map—just a little island off the south coast of England—that most tourists who are trying to "see" the British Isles pass it by unnoticed. It is off the beaten track which tourists follow, it has no old ruins of world-wide renown, it is the home of no men of extraordinary fame, and its surface is marked by no very unusual freaks of nature; indeed, it is only a bit of English country, just like any other English countryside except that it is surrounded by water,

*Student's description.

that it is a little more secluded, and that its fields are a little greener and its days sunnier than those of other parts of England. It is, however, so vivid an incarnation of rural England, so precisely a counterpart of the England which has been depicted to your mind by every English writer from Chaucer to Tennyson, that, if you visit it, you get a breath of real English atmosphere, an insight into English rural life, which you cannot obtain by gazing at ancient ruins, by inspecting handsome cathedrals, or by listening to a guide's explanations of the wonders of a remarkable work of nature.

When you go to the Isle of Wight, if you make your headquarters at Newport, the musty old capital of the island, and stop at Warburton's Hotel, your host will tell you of an old castle about a mile's drive from the town, a Norman fortress with a Saxon keep, where King Charles was once kept a prisoner, and he will tell you of a fine stone church, where lie the remains of so-and-so, daughter of the well-known Prince so-and-so, of whom, undoubtedly, you have never heard. But, if you want to see the town of Newport, you will not take the innkeeper's advice and hire his carriage to make the tour of the neighborhood. You will take a walk out into the country, leave the stuffy little town behind, and ramble through the green fields and over the rounding hills, climbing over stiles, walking through gates, until you get out on top of one of the low hills, out in the bright morning sun, where you can look, without a thought of history and dates, at the old castle standing not far away on a wooded knoll, its stone tower extending above the surrounding trees.

From your position you can overlook the landscape. If you look back over the country you have passed through, you will see the hills lying calm and still in the sunlight, their surface sectioned off into quiet little farms. I remember we likened the scene to a patchwork quilt spread over a billowy bed. A prettily arranged quilt it was. On the side of the larger billow, which lay opposite us, there was a large, right triangle of emerald-green velvet—a field of rich, young grass. Against one leg of this triangle was placed a rectangle of brown—a field lately plowed and still dark with the upturned clod. From the other leg was spread out

an irregular polygon of green pasture-land, spotted with white sheep. On the hypothenuse was constructed an uneven parallelogram, yellow with growing corn. And on the sides of all these figures lay other figures, and on the sides of these, others; circles of green, spotted with the brown backs of browsing cattle, squares of gray, plowed land, and more sections of sheep-dotted pasture, stretching in unordered neatness over the hillsides.

As you sit down on the soft, grassy bank and drowsily gaze at the brown lines of hawthorn hedges which separate the fields and intersect the opposite hillside in every direction; at the yellow strip of road which comes out of the valley, curving in a long bow diagonally across the hills, you dreamily absorb the peace and quiet of English rural life. Below, in the little valley, is a cozy-looking homestead, resting in the midst of a clump of trees. In the field above it a man is working with his scythe. Along the road an old woman is riding to town in her clumsy, wooden market-cart. From the hillside comes the noise of bleating sheep. In the hedge near by a sparrow flutters about among the branches. From all around rises the good scent of growing things.

You loll around, quiet as the scene itself, until the sun in mid-sky informs you that lunch is waiting for you at Warburton's Hotel. As you start to return to your hotel, the stone keep of the castle peeps out from among the leaves to try to tell you that you have done no sight-seeing this morning. But the peaceful hills, the quietly browsing cattle, and the sweet-smelling air make you feel that you have seen deeper into the inside of England than if you had visited the King at Buckingham.

Daybreak on the Prairies*

There was not a sign of human existence in sight. It mattered not in which direction we looked, the same forbidding prospect confronted us—a sweep of saffron plain meeting in a far-off horizon a hot, cloudless summer sky, and that was all. We had but just made our way through a thick, damp wood, and the open with

*Student's description.

its utter barrenness offered indeed an uninteresting contrast. Nevertheless we tramped on stoutly, sometimes stopping a moment to shift the shoulder straps of our packs or to mop our sweat-drenched faces. Every footfall sent up a little cloud of choking, white dust, and the sun was never so hot as it was that day.

Luckily, it was past noon when we left the wood, so that we had not been subjected to the sizzling heat a very long time before a gentle evening breeze came up to revive us somewhat, and the sun began to sink upon our left. At about the same time we stumbled upon old, sand-clogged wagon ruts and knew that we had found the trail for which we had kept our eyes so long upon the ground.

We turned to follow the scarcely discernible track and plodded wearily onward, caring little that the flaring yellow of the plain had turned into a sickening gray, the intense blue of the sky into a lifeless, somber drab; and the disappearing sun, with its gaudy magenta effects, seemed to us only like a clot of fresh blood upon dirty linen. When the sun sank entirely, there remained only a narrow streak of pale buff which gradually shaded off into a deep, deep violet, lending to the vastness of desolation an air of abject infiniteness.

When we could no longer see our own grotesque shadows, nor follow the trail with certainty, very silently we unslung our packs and spread a blanket upon the ground so that we might sleep a few minutes before setting out again, for we had decided to try to cross the little desert as soon as possible that same night. The absolute loneliness of our situation, however, cast an unhallowed, entrancing spell upon me, and I could not close my eyes.

I felt as if I were floating among the planets. There was not a star, though, to be seen, not a light of any sort; above, below, on every side, was the same velvet blackness; and the universe was as solemnly quiet, as heavily noiseless, as expectantly calm, as it was in the dawn of creation. I may have fallen asleep, but it seemed only a short time before I found myself lying full length, my chin in my hands, gazing straight ahead into the impenetrable darkness, and unconsciously becoming conscious that the blackness in which I had been buried was stealthily changing into an indefinable, greenish gray.

Far away where earth and sky were one, unknown forces were striving to pry them apart, for, presently succeeding, a crevice, very narrow, letting in a silvery light, stretched along the edge of the plain; and from behind the crevice, which was gradually widening, glittered and glistened a million scintillating colors, until all at once there burst forth a soft, soothing golden glow, which grew brighter and brighter, and bordered at length with garish pinks and purples, until it merged finally into the downy gray above. I was completely charmed by the brilliancy of the swiftly changing colors which, of themselves, seemed to have distilled the clean, sweet perfumes the risen breezes were bearing. I sat up to watch a ribbon of purple unwind itself along the bank of gold. But the purple grew quickly into a dazzling, rich, soft, and perfectly pure blue, while in the meantime a clear-cut crescent of amber, from which radiated every imaginable tint, broke into what seemed the very foreground of the picture, rising lightly and steadily, casting into insignificance the splendid colors which had heralded its advent, until it rested in perfect balance upon the uttermost edge of the world—a great disc of blinding, burnished copper.

We were into another day.

A Corn-Field

A corn-field in July is a hot place. The soil is hot and dry; the wind comes across the lazily murmuring leaves laden with a warm sickening smell drawn from the rapidly-growing, broad-flung banners of the corn. The sun, nearly vertical, drops a flood of dazzling light and heat upon the field over which the cool shadows run, only to make the heat seem the more intense.

Julia Peterson, faint with fatigue, was toiling back and forth between the corn-rows, holding the handles of the double-shovel corn-plow, while her little brother Otto rode the steaming horse. Her heart was full of bitterness, and her face flushed with heat, and her muscles aching with fatigue. The heat grew terrible. The corn came to her shoulders, and not a breath seemed to reach her, while the sun, nearing the noon mark, lay pitilessly upon her

*Hamlin Garland, in *Main Travelled Roads.*

shoulders, protected only by a calico dress. The dust rose under her feet, and as she was wet with perspiration it soiled her till, with a woman's instinctive cleanliness, she shuddered. Her head throbbed dangerously. What matter to her that the kingbird pitched jovially from the maples to catch a wandering blue-bottle fly, that the robin was feeding its young, that the bobolink was singing? All these things, if she saw them, only threw her bondage to labor into greater relief.

Across the field, in another patch of corn, she could see her father —a big, gruff-voiced, wide-bearded Norwegian—at work also with a plow. The corn must be plowed, and so she toiled on, the tears dropping from the shadow of the ugly sunbonnet she wore. Her shoes, coarse and square-toed, chafed her feet; her hands, large and strong, were browned, or more properly *burnt*, on the backs by the sun. The horse's harness "*creek*-cracked," as he swung steadily and patiently forward, the moisture pouring from his sides, his nostrils distended.

The field ran down to a road, and on the other side of the road ran a river—a broad, clear, shallow expanse at that point, and the eyes of the boy gazed longingly at the pond and the cool shadow each time that he turned at the fence.

"Say, Jule, I'm goin' in! Come, can't I? Come—say!" he pleaded, as they stopped at the fence to let the horse breathe.

"I've let you go wade twice."

"But that don't do any good. My legs is all smarty, 'cause ol' Jack sweats so." The boy turned around on the horse's back and slid back to his rump. "I can't stand it!" he burst out, sliding off and darting under the fence. "Father can't see."

The girl put her elbows on the fence, and watched her little brother as he sped away to the pool, throwing off his clothes as he ran, whooping with uncontrollable delight. Soon she could hear him splashing about in the water a short distance up the stream, and caught glimpses of his little shiny body and happy face. How cool that water looked! And the shadows there by the big basswood! How that water would cool her blistered feet! An impulse seized her, and she squeezed between the rails of the fence, and stood in the road looking up and down to see that the way was

clear. It was not a main-traveled road; no one was likely to come; why not?

She hurriedly took off her shoes and stockings—how delicious the cool, soft velvet of the grass!—and sitting down on the bank under the great basswood, whose roots formed an abrupt bank, she slid her poor blistered, chafed feet into the water, her bare head leaned against the huge tree-trunk.

And now as she rested, the beauty of the scene came to her. Over her the wind moved the leaves. A jay screamed far off, as if answering the cries of the boy. A kingfisher crossed and recrossed the stream with a dipping sweep of his wings. The river sang with its lips to the pebbles. The vast clouds went by majestically, far above the tree-tops, and the snap and buzzing and ringing whir of July insects made a ceaseless, slumberous undertone of song solvent of all else. The tired girl forgot her work. She began to dream.

A Night Among the Pines*

From Bleymard after dinner, although it was already late, I set out to scale a portion of the Lozère. An ill-marked stony drove-road guided me forward; and I met nearly half a dozen bullock-carts descending from the woods, each laden with a whole pine-tree for the winter's firing. At the top of the woods, which do not climb very high upon this cold ridge, I struck leftward by a path among the pines, until I hit on a dell of green turf, where a streamlet made a little spout over some stones to serve me for a water-tap, "In a more sacred or sequestered bower—nor nymph nor faunus haunted." The trees were not old, but they grew thickly round the glade: there was no outlook, except northeastward upon distant hill-tops, or straight upward to the sky; and the encampment felt secure and private like a room. By the time I had made my arrangements and fed Modestine, the day was already beginning to decline. I buckled myself to the knees into my sack and made a hearty meal; and as soon as the sun went down, I pulled my cap over my eyes and fell asleep.

*Robert Louis Stevenson, in *Travels with a Donkey*.

Night is a dead monotonous period under a roof; but in the open world it passes lightly, with its stars and dews and perfumes, and the hours are marked by changes in the face of Nature. What seems a kind of temporal death to people choked between walls and curtains is only a light and living slumber to the man who sleeps afield. All night long he can hear Nature breathing deeply and freely; even as she takes her rest she turns and smiles; and there is one stirring hour unknown to those who dwell in houses, when a wakeful influence goes abroad over the sleeping hemisphere, and all the outdoor world are on their feet. It is then that the cock first crows, not this time to announce the dawn, but like a cheerful watchman speeding the course of night. Cattle awake on the meadows; sheep break their fast on dewy hillsides, and change to a new lair among the ferns; and houseless men, who have lain down with the fowls, open their dim eyes and behold the beauty of the night.

At what inaudible summons, at what gentle touch of Nature, are all these sleepers thus recalled in the same hour to life? Do the stars rain down an influence, or do we share some thrill of mother earth below our resting bodies? Even shepherds and old country-folk, who are the deepest read in these arcana, have not a guess as to the means or purpose of this mighty resurrection. Toward two in the morning they declare the thing takes place; and neither know nor inquire further. And at least it is a pleasant incident. We are disturbed in our slumber only, like the luxurious Montaigne, "that we may the better and more sensibly relish it." We have a moment to look upon the stars, and there is a special pleasure for some minds in the reflection that we share the impulse with all outdoor creatures in our neighborhood, that we have escaped out of the Bastille of civilization, and are become, for the time being, a mere kindly animal and a sheep of Nature's flock.

When that hour came to me among the pines, I wakened thirsty. My tin was standing by me half full of water. I emptied it at a draft; and feeling broad awake after this internal cold aspersion, sat upright to make a cigarette. The stars were clear, colored, and jewel-like, but not frosty. A faint silvery vapor stood for the Milky Way. All around me the black fir-points stood upright

and stock-still. By the whiteness of the pack-saddle, I could see Modestine walking round and round at the length of her tether; I could hear her steadily munching at the sward; but there was not another sound, save the indescribable quiet talk of the runnel over the stones. I lay lazily smoking and studying the color of the sky, as we call the void of space, from where it showed a reddish gray behind the pines to where it showed a glossy blue-black between the stars. As if to be more like a peddler, I wear a silver ring. This I could see faintly shining as I raised or lowered the cigarette; and at each whiff the inside of my hand was illuminated, and became for a second the highest light in the landscape.

A faint wind, more like a moving coolness than a stream of air, passed down the glade from time to time; so that even in my great chamber the air was being renewed all night long. I thought with horror of the inn at Chasseradès and the congregated nightcaps; with horror of the nocturnal prowesses of clerks and students, of hot theaters and pass-keys and close rooms. I have not often enjoyed a more serene possession of myself, nor felt more independent of material aids. The outer world, from which we cower into our houses, seemed after all a gentle habitable place; and night after night a man's bed, it seemed, was laid and waiting for him in the fields, where God keeps an open house. I thought I had rediscovered one of those truths which are revealed to savages and hid from political economists: at the least, I had discovered a new pleasure for myself. And yet even while I was exulting in my solitude I became aware of a strange lack. I wished a companion to lie near me in the starlight, silent and not moving, but ever within touch. For there is a fellowship more quiet even than solitude, and which, rightly understood, is solitude made perfect. And to live out of doors with the woman a man loves is of all lives the most complete and free.

As I thus lay, between content and longing, a faint noise stole toward me through the pines. I thought, at first, it was the crowing of cocks or the barking of dogs at some very distant farm; but steadily and gradually it took articulate shape in my ears, until I became aware that a passenger was going by upon the high-road in the valley, and singing loudly as he went. There was more of

good-will than grace in his performance; but he trolled with ample lungs; and the sound of his voice took hold upon the hillside and set the air shaking in the leafy glens. I have heard people passing by night in sleeping cities; some of them sang; one, I remember, played loudly on the bagpipes. I have heard the rattle of a cart or carriage spring up suddenly after hours of stillness, and pass, for some minutes, within the range of my hearing as I lay abed. There is a romance about all who are abroad in the black hours, and with something of a thrill we try to guess their business. But here the romance was double: first, this glad passenger, lit internally with wine, who sent up his voice in music through the night; and then I, on the other hand, buckled into my sack, and smoking alone in the pine-woods between four and five thousand feet toward the stars.

When I awoke again (Sunday, 29th September), many of the stars had disappeared; only the stronger companions of the night still burned visibly overhead; and away toward the east I saw a faint haze of light upon the horizon, such as had been the Milky Way when I was last awake. Day was at hand. I lit my lantern, and by its glowworm light put on my boots and gaiters; then I broke up some bread for Modestine, filled my can at the water-tap, and lit my spirit-lamp to boil myself some chocolate. The blue darkness lay long in the glade where I had so sweetly slumbered; but soon there was a broad streak of orange melting into gold along the mountain-tops of Vivarais. A solemn glee possessed my mind at this gradual and lovely coming in of day. I heard the runnel with delight; I looked round me for something beautiful and unexpected; but the still black pine-trees, the hollow glade, the munching ass, remained unchanged in figure. Nothing had altered but the light, and that, indeed, shed over all a spirit of life and of breathing peace, and moved me to a strange exhilaration.

I drank my water chocolate, which was hot if it was not rich, and strolled here and there, and up and down about the glade. While I was thus delaying, a gush of steady wind, as long as a heavy sigh, poured direct out of the quarter of the morning. It was cold, and set me sneezing. The trees near at hand tossed their black plumes in its passage; and I could see the thin distant spires of pine along the edge of the hill rock slightly to and fro against the

golden east. Ten minutes after, the sunlight spread at a gallop along the hillside, scattering shadows and sparkles, and the day had come completely.

I hastened to prepare my pack, and tackle the steep ascent that lay before me; but I had something on my mind. It was only a fancy; yet a fancy will sometimes be importunate. I had been most hospitably received and punctually served in my green caravanserai. The room was airy, the water excellent, and the dawn had called me to a moment. I say nothing of the tapestries or the inimitable ceiling, nor yet of the view which I command from the windows; but I felt I was in some one's debt for all this liberal entertainment. And so it pleased me, in a half laughing way, to leave pieces of money on the turf as I went along, until I had left enough for my night's lodging. I trust they did not fall to some rich and churlish drover.

A Portrait*

We have no family pictures, Prue and I; only a portrait of my grandmother hangs upon our parlor wall. It was taken at least a century ago, and represents the venerable lady, whom I remember in my childhood in spectacles and comely cap, as a young and blooming girl.

She is sitting upon an old-fashioned sofa, by the side of a prim aunt of hers, and with her back to the open window. Her costume is quaint, but handsome. It consists of a cream-colored dress made high in the throat, ruffled around the neck, and over the bosom and the shoulders. The waist is just under her shoulders, and the sleeves are tight, tighter than any of our coat sleeves, and also ruffled at the wrist. Around the plump and rosy neck, which I remember as shriveled and sallow, and hidden under a decent lace handkerchief, hangs, in the picture, a necklace of large ebony beads. There are two curls upon the forehead, and the rest of the hair flows away in ringlets down the neck.

The hands hold an open book; the eyes look up from it with tranquil sweetness, and, through the open window behind, you

*George William Curtis, *Prue and I.*

see a quiet landscape—a hill, a tree, the glimpse of a river, and a few peaceful summer clouds.

Often in my younger days, when my grandmother sat by the fire after dinner, lost in thought—perhaps remembering the time when the picture was really a portrait—I have curiously compared her wasted face with the blooming beauty of the girl, and tried to detect a likeness. It was strange how the resemblance would sometimes start out; how, as I gazed and gazed upon her old face, age disappeared before my eager glance, as snow melts in the sunshine, revealing the flowers of a forgotten spring.

It was touching to see my grandmother steal quietly up to her portrait, on still summer mornings when everyone had left the house—and I, the only child, played, disregarded—and look at it wistfully and long.

She held her hand over her eyes to shade them from the light that streamed in at the window, and I have seen her stand at least a quarter of an hour gazing steadfastly at the picture. She said nothing, she made no motion, she shed no tear, but when she turned away there was always a pensive sweetness in her face that made it not less lovely than the face of her youth.

I have learned since, what her thoughts must have been—how that long, wistful glance annihilated time and space, how forms and faces unknown to any other, rose in sudden resurrection around her—how she loved, suffered, struggled, and conquered again; how many a jest that I shall never hear, how many a game that I shall never play, how many a song that I shall never sing, were all renewed and remembered as my grandmother contemplated her picture.

The Story of Christopher*

The most troublesome animal is Christopher. He is only a source of amusement as long as there is no accident, but I am always a little anxious lest he kick or bite someone. The curious thing is that he is quiet enough to handle for walking or riding

*Captain R. F. Scott, in *Scott's Last Expedition*. By permission of Dodd, Mead and Co.

exercise or in the stable, but as soon as a sledge comes into the program he is seized with a very demon of viciousness, and bites and kicks with every intent to do injury. It seems to be getting harder rather than easier to get him into the traces; the last two turns, he has had to be thrown, as he is unmanageable even on three legs. Oates, Bowers, and Anton gather round the beast and lash up one foreleg; then with his head held on both sides Oates gathers back the traces; quick as lightning the little beast flashes round with heels flying aloft. This goes on till some degree of exhaustion gives the men a better chance.

But, as I have mentioned, during the last two days the period has been so prolonged that Oates has had to hasten matters by tying a short line to the other foreleg and throwing the beast when he lashes out. Even when on his knees he continues to struggle, and one of those nimble hind legs may fly out at any time. Once in the sledge and started on three legs all is well and the fourth leg can be released. At least, all has been well until today, when quite a comedy was enacted. He was going along quietly with Oates when a dog frightened him; he flung up his head, twitched the rope out of Oates's hands, and dashed away. It was not a question of blind fright, as immediately after gaining freedom he set about most systematically to get rid of his load. At first he gave sudden twists, and in this manner succeeded in dislodging two bales of hay; then he caught sight of other sledges and dashed for them. They could scarcely get out of his way in time; the fell intention was evident all through, to dash his load against some other pony and sledge and so free himself of it. He ran for Bowers two or three times with this design, then made for Keohane, never going off far and dashing inward with teeth bared and heels flying all over the place. By this time people were gathering round, and first one and then another succeeded in clambering on to the sledge as it flew by, till Oates, Bowers, Nelson, and Atkinson were all sitting on it. He tried to rid himself of this human burden as he had of the hay bales, and succeeded in dislodging Atkinson with violence, but the remainder dug their heels into the snow, and finally the little brute was tired out. Even then he tried to savage anyone approaching his leading line, and it was some

time before Oates could get hold of it. Such is the tale of Christopher. I am exceedingly glad there are not other ponies like him.

In the Polar Sea*

In the evening we put in to the edge of the ice, so as to stretch our legs a little; they were stiff with sitting in the kayak all day, and we wanted to get a little view over the water to the west by ascending a hummock. As we went ashore, the question arose as to how we should moor our precious vessel.

"Take one of the braces," said Johansen; he was standing on the ice.

"But is it strong enough?"

"Yes," he answered; "I have used it as a halyard on my sledge-sail all the time."

"Oh, well, it doesn't require much to hold these light kayaks," said I, a little ashamed of having been so timid, and I moored them with the halyard, which was a strap cut from a raw walrus hide.

We had been on the ice a little while, moving up and down close to the kayaks. The wind had dropped considerably, and seemed to be more westerly, making it doubtful whether we could make use of it any longer, and we went up on to a hummock close by to ascertain this better. As we stood there, Johansen suddenly cried, "I say! the kayaks are adrift!"

We ran down as hard as we could. They were already a little way out, and were drifting quickly off; the painter had given way.

"Here, take my watch!" I said to Johansen, giving it to him; and as quickly as possible I threw off some clothing, so as to be able to swim more easily. I did not dare to take everything off, as I might so easily get cramp. I sprang into the water, but the wind was off the ice, and the light kayaks, with their light rigging, gave it a good hold. They were already well out, and were drifting rapidly. The water was icy cold; it was hard work swimming with

*Fridtjof Nansen, *Farthest North*. By permission of Harper & Brothers.

clothes on; and the kayaks drifted farther and farther, often faster than I could swim. It seemed more than doubtful whether I could manage it. But all our hope was drifting there; all we possessed was on board—we had not even a knife with us; and whether I got cramp and sank here, or turned back without the kayaks, it would come to pretty much the same thing; so I exerted myself to the utmost. When I got tired I turned over, and swam on my back, and then I could see Johansen walking restlessly up and down on the ice. Poor lad! He could not stand still, and thought it dreadful not to be able to do anything. He had not much hope that I could do it, but it would not improve matters in the least if he threw himself into the water, too. He said afterwards that these were the worst moments he had ever lived through.

But when I turned over again and saw that I was nearer the kayaks, my courage rose, and I redoubled my exertions. I felt, however, that my limbs were gradually stiffening and losing all feeling, and I knew that in a short time I should not be able to move them. But there was not far to go now; if I could hold out a little longer we should be saved—and I went on. The strokes became more and more feeble, but the distance became shorter and shorter, and I began to think I should reach the kayaks. At last I was able to stretch out my hand to the snow-shoe which lay across the sterns. I grasped it, pulled myself in to the edge of the kayak—and we were saved! I tried to pull myself up, but the whole of my body was so stiff with cold that this was an impossibility. For a moment I thought that, after all, it was too late; I was to get so far, but not be able to get in. After a little, however, I managed to swing one leg up on to the edge of the sledge which lay on the deck, and in this way managed to tumble up. There I sat, but so stiff with cold that I had difficulty in paddling. Nor was it easy to paddle in the double vessel, where I first had to take one or two strokes on one side, and then step into the other kayak to take a few strokes on the other side. If I had been able to separate them, and row in one while I towed the other, it would have been easy enough; but I could not undertake that piece of work, for I should have been stiff before it was done; the thing to be done was to keep warm by rowing as hard as I could.

The cold had robbed my whole body of feeling, but when the gusts of wind came they seemed to go right through me as I stood there in my thin, wet woolen shirt. I shivered, my teeth chattered, and I was numb almost all over; but I could still use the paddle, and I should get warm when I got back on the ice again. Two auks were lying close to the bow, and the thought of having auk for supper was too tempting; we were in want of food now. I got hold of my gun and shot them with one discharge. Johansen said afterwards that he started at the report, thinking some accident had happened, and could not understand what I was about out there, but when he saw me paddle and pick up two birds he thought I had gone out of my mind.

At last I managed to reach the edge of the ice, but the current had driven me a long way from our landing-place. Johansen came along the edge of the ice, jumped into the kayak beside me, and we soon got back to our place. I was undeniably a good deal exhausted, and could barely manage to crawl on land. I could scarcely stand; and while I shook and trembled all over, Johansen had to pull off the wet things I had on, put on the few dry ones I still had in reserve, and spread the sleeping-bag out upon the ice. I packed myself well into it, and he covered me with the sail and everything he could find to keep out the cold air. There I lay shivering for a long time, but gradually the warmth began to return to my body. For some time longer, however, my feet had no more feeling in them than icicles, for they had been partly naked in the water. While Johansen put up the tent and prepared supper, consisting of my two auks, I fell asleep. He let me sleep quietly, and when I awoke supper had been ready for some time, and stood simmering over the fire. Auk and hot soup soon effaced the last traces of my swim. During the night my clothes were hung out to dry, and the next day were nearly all dry again.

Ascent of the Weisshorn*

On Friday the 16th of August I rose at 4:30 A. M.; the eastern heaven was hot with the glow of the rising sun, and against the burn-

*John Tyndall, *Mountaineering in 1861.*

ing sky the mountain outlines were most impressively drawn. At 5:30 I bade good-by to the excellent little auberge, and engaging a porter to carry my knapsack, went straight down the mountain toward Briegg. Beyond the end of the present ice the land gives evidence of vast glacier operations. It is scooped into hollows and raised into mounds; long ridges, sharpening to edges at the top, indicating the stranded moraines of the ancient glacier. And these hollows, and these hills, over which the ice had passed, destroying every trace of life which could possibly find a lodgment in them, were now clothed with the richest verdure. And not to vegetable life alone did they give support, for a million grylli chirruped in the grass. Rich, sapid meadows spread their emerald carpets in the sun; nut trees and fruit trees glimmered as the light fell upon their quivering leaves. Thus sanative nature healed the scars which she had herself inflicted. The road is very rough a part of the way to Briegg; let us trust that before your arrival it will be improved. I took the diligence to Visp, and engaged a porter immediately to Randa. I had sent Benen thither, on reaching the Bel Alp, to seek out a resting place whence the Weisshorn might be assailed. On my arrival I learned that he had made the necessary reconnaissance, and entertained hopes of our being able to gain the top.

This noble mountain had been tried on various occasions and from different sides by brave and competent men, but had never been scaled; and from the entries in the travelers' books I might infer that formidable obstacles stood in the way of a successful ascent. The peak of the mountain is not visible at Randa, being far withdrawn behind the Alps. Beyond the Biezbach its ramparts consist of a craggy slope crowned above by three tiers of rocky strata. In front of the hotel is a mountain slope with pines clinging to its ledges, while stretching across the couloir of the Biezbach the divided ramparts are connected by battlements of ice. A quantity of debris which has been carried down the couloir spreads out in the shape of a fan at the bottom; near the edge of this debris stands a group of dingy houses, and close alongside them our pathway up the mountain runs.

Previous to quitting Randa I had two pair of rugs sewed to-

gether so as to form two sacks. These and other coverlets intended for my men, together with our wine and provisions, were sent on in advance of us. At 1 P. M., on the 18th of August, we, that is Benen, Wenger, and myself, quitted the hotel, and were soon zigzagging among the pines of the opposite mountain. Wenger had been the guide of my friend F., and had shown himself so active and handy on the Strahleck that I commissioned Benen to engage him. During the previous night I had been very unwell, but I hoped that the strength left me, if properly applied, and drained to the uttermost, would still enable me to keep up with my companions. As I climbed the slope I suffered from intense thirst, and we once halted beside a fillet of clear spring water to have a draft. It seemed powerless to quench the drought which beset me. We reached a châlet; milking time was at hand and at our request a smart young Senner caught up a pail, and soon returned with it full of delicious milk. It was poured into a small tub. With my two hands I seized the two ends of a diameter of this vessel, gave it the necessary inclination, and stooping down, with a concentration of purpose which I had rarely before exerted, I drew the milk into me. Thrice I returned to the attack before that insatiate thirst gave way. The effect was astonishing. The liquid appeared to lubricate every atom of my body, and its fragrance to permeate my brain. I felt a growth of strength at once commence within me; all anxiety as to physical power with reference to the work in hand soon vanished, and before retiring to rest I was able to say to Benen, "Go where thou wilt tomorrow, and I will follow thee."

Two hours' additional climbing brought us to our bivouac. A ledge of rock jutted from the mountain side, and formed an overhanging roof. On removing the stones from beneath it, a space of comparatively dry clay was laid bare. This was to be my bed, and to soften it Wenger considerately stirred it up with his ax. The position was excellent, for lying upon my left side, I commanded the whole range of Monte Rosa, from the Mischabel to the Breithorn. We were on the edge of an amphitheater. Beyond the Schallenbach was the stately Mettelhorn. A row of eminent peaks swept round to the right, linked by loftly ridges of cliffs, thus

forming the circus in which the Schallenberg Glacier originated. They were, however, only a spur cast out from the vaster Weisshorn, the cone of which was not visible from our dormitory. I wished to examine it, and in company with Benen skirted the mountain for half an hour, until the whole colossal pyramid stood facing us. When I first looked at it my hope sank, but both of us gathered confidence from a more lengthened gaze. The mountain is a pyramid with three faces, the intersections of which form three sharp edges, or *arêtes*. The end of the eastern *arête* was nearest to us, and on it our attention was principally fixed. A couloir led up to it filled with snow, which Benen, after having examined it with the telescope, pronounced "furchtbar steil." This slope was cut across by a bergschrund, which we also carefully examined, and finally, Benen decided on the route to be pursued next morning. A chastened hope was predominant in both our breasts as we returned to our shelter.

Water was our first necessity; it seemed everywhere, but there was none to drink. It was locked to solidity in the ice and snow. The sound of it came booming up from the Vispbach, as it broke into foam or rolled its bowlders over its waterworn bed; and the swish of many a minor streamlet mingled with the muffled roar of the large one. Benen set out in search of the precious liquid and after a long absence returned with a jug and panful. I had been particular in including tea in our list of provisions; but on opening the parcel we found it half green, and not to be indulged in at a moment when the main object of one's life was to get an hour's sleep. We rejected the tea and made coffee instead. At our evening meal the idea of toasting our cheese occurred to Wenger, who is a man rich in expedients of all kinds. He turned the section of a large cheese toward the flame of our pine fire; it fizzed and blistered and turned viscous, and the toasted surface being removed was consumed with relish by us all. Our meal being ended and our beds arranged, by the help of Benen, I introduced myself into my two sacks in succession, and placed a knapsack beneath my head for a pillow. The talk now ceased and sleep became the object of our devotions.

But the goddess flies most shyly where she is most intensely

wooed; still I think she touched my eyes gently once or twice during the night. The sunset had been unspeakably grand, steeping the zenith in violet, and flooding the base of the heavens with crimson light. Immediately opposite to us, on the other side of the valley of St. Nicholas, rose the Mischabel, with its two great peaks, the Grubenhorn and the Täschhorn, each barely under 15,000 feet in height. Next came the Alphubel, with its flattened crown of snow; then the Alleleinhorn and Rympfischhorn encased in glittering enamel; then the Cima di Jazzi; next the mass of Monte Rosa, with nothing competent to cast a shadow between it and the sun, and consequently flooded with light from bottom to top. The face of the Lyskamm turned toward us was for the most part shaded, but here and there its projecting portions jutted forth like red-hot embers as the light fell upon them. The "Twins" were most singularly illuminated; across the waist of each of them was drawn a black bar produced by the shadow of a corner of the Breithorn, while their white bases and whiter crowns were exposed to the sunlight. Over the rugged face of the Breithorn itself the light fell as if in splashes, igniting its glaciers and swathing its black crags in a layer of transparent red. The Mettelhorn was cold; so was the entire range over which the Weisshorn ruled as king, while the glaciers which they embraced lay gray and ghastly in the twilight shade.

The sun is going, but not yet gone; while up the arch of the opposite heavens, the moon, within one day of being full, is hastening to our aid. She finally appears exactly behind the peak of the Rympfischhorn: the cone of the mountain being projected for a time as a triangle on the disc. Only for a moment, however; for the queenly orb sails aloft, clears the mountain, and bears splendidly away through the tinted sky. The motion was quite visible, and resembled that of a vast balloon. As the day approached its end the scene assumed the most sublime aspect. All the lower portions of the mountains were deeply shaded, while the loftiest peaks, ranged upon a semicircle, were fully exposed to the sinking sun. They seemed pyramids of solid fire, while here and there long stretches of crimson light drawn over the higher snowfields linked the glorified summits together. An intensely illuminated geranium

flower seems to swim in its own color, which apparently surrounds the petals like a layer, and defeats by its luster any attempt of the eye to seize upon the sharp outline of the leaves. A similar effect was here observed upon the mountains; the glory did not seem to come from them alone, but seemed also effluent from the air around them. This gave them a certain buoyancy which suggested entire detachment from the earth. They swam in splendor, which intoxicated the soul, and I will not now repeat in my moments of soberness the extravagant analogies which then ran through my brain. As the evening advanced, the eastern heavens low down assumed a deep purple hue, above which, and blending with it by infinitesimal gradations, was a belt of red, and over this again zones of orange and violet. I walked around the corner of the mountain at sunset, and found the western sky glowing with a more transparent crimson than that which overspread the east. The crown of the Weisshorn was embedded in this magnificent light. After sunset the purple of the east changed to a deep neutral tint, and against the faded red which spread above it, the sun-forsaken mountains laid their cold and ghastly heads. The ruddy color vanished more and more; the stars strengthened in luster, until finally the moon and they held undisputed possession of the blue gray sky.

I lay with my face turned toward the moon until it became so chilled that I was forced to protect it by a light handkerchief. The power of blinding the eyes is ascribed to the moonbeams, but the real mischief is that produced by radiation from the eyes into clear space, and the inflammation consequent upon the chill. As the cold increased I was fain to squeeze myself more and more underneath my ledge, so as to lessen the space of sky against which my body could radiate. Nothing could be more solemn than the night. Up from the valley came the low thunder of the Vispbach. Over the Dom flashed in succession the stars of Orion, until finally the entire constellation hung aloft. Higher up in heaven was the moon, and her rays as they fell upon the snowfields and pyramids were sent back in silvery luster by some, while others remained dull. These, as the orb sailed round, came duly in for their share of the glory. The Twins caught it at length, and retained it long, shining

with a pure spiritual radiance, while the moon continued to ride above the hills.

I looked at my watch at 12 o'clock; and a second time at 2. A.M. The moon was then just touching the crest of the Schallenberg and we were threatened with the withdrawal of her light. This soon occurred. We rose at 2:15 A.M., consumed our coffee, and had to wait idly for the dawn. A faint illumination at length overspread the west, and with this promise of the coming day we quitted our bivouac at 3:30 A.M. No cloud was to be seen; as far as the weather was concerned we were sure to have fair play. We rounded the shingly shoulder of the mountain to the edge of a snowfield, but before entering upon it I disburdened myself of my strong shooting jacket, and left it on the mountain side. The sunbeams and my own exertion would, I knew, keep me only too warm during the day. We crossed the snow, cut our way through a piece of entangled glacier, reached the bergschrund, and passed it without a rope. We ascended the frozen snow of the couloir by steps, but soon diverged from it to the rocks at our right, and scaled them to the end of the eastern *arête* of the mountain.

Here a saddle of snow separates us from the next higher rocks. With our staff-spikes at one side of the saddle, we pass by steps cut upon the other. The snow is firmly congealed. We reach the rocks, which we find hewn into fantastic turrets and obelisks, while the loose chips of this colossal sculpture are strewn confusedly upon the ridge. Amid the chips we cautiously pick our way, winding round the towers or scaling them amain. From the very first the work is heavy, the bending, twisting, reaching, and drawing up, calling upon all the muscles of the frame. After two hours of this work we halt, and looking back we observe two moving objects on the glacier below us. At first we take them to be chamois, but they are instantly pronounced men, and the telescope at once confirms this. The leader carries an ax, and his companion a knapsack and alpenstock. They are following our traces, losing them apparently now and then, and waiting to recover them. Our expedition had put Randa in a state of excitement, and some of its best climbers had come to Benen and urged him to take them with him. But this he did not deem necessary, and now here were two of them

determined to try the thing on their own account; and perhaps to dispute with us the honor of the enterprise. On this point, however, our uneasiness was small.

Resuming our gymnastics, the rocky staircase led us to the flat summit of a tower, where we found ourselves cut off from a similar tower by a deep gap bitten into the mountain. Retreat appeared inevitable, but it is wonderful how many ways out of difficulty open to a man who diligently seeks them. The rope is here our refuge. Benen coils it around his waist, scrapes along the surface of the rock, fixes himself on a ledge, where he can lend me a helping hand. I follow him, Wenger follows me, and in a few minutes all three of us stand in the middle of the gap. By a kind of screw motion we twist ourselves round the opposite tower, and reach the *arête* behind it. Work of this kind, however, is not to be performed by the day, and with a view of sparing our strength, we quit the *arête* and endeavor to get along the southern slope of the pyramid. The mountain is here scarred by longitudinal depressions which stretch a long way down it. These are now filled with clear hard ice, produced by the melting and refreezing of the snow. The cutting of steps across these couloirs proves to be so tedious and fatiguing that I urge Benen to abandon it and try the *arête* once more. By a stout tug we regain the ridge and work along it as before. Here and there from the northern side the snow has folded itself over the crags, and along it we sometimes work upward. The *arête* for a time has become gradually narrower, and the precipices on each side more sheer. We reach the end of one of the subdivisions of the ridge, and find ourselves separated from the next rocks by a gap about twenty yards across. The *arête* here has narrowed to a mere wall, which, however, as rock would present no serious difficulty. But upon the wall of rock is placed a second wall of snow, which dwindles to a knife edge at the top. It is white and pure, of very fine grain, and a little moist. How to pass this snow catenary I knew not, for I had no idea of a human foot trusting itself upon so frail a support. Benen's practical sagacity was, however, greater than mine. He tried the snow by squeezing it with his foot, and to my astonishment commenced to cross. Even after the pressure of his feet the space he had to stand on did not exceed

a handbreath. I followed him, exactly as a boy walking along a horizontal pole, with toes turned outward. Right and left the precipices were appalling; but the sense of power on such occasions is exceedingly sweet. We reached the opposite rock, and here a smile rippled over Benen's countenance as he turned toward me. He knew that he had done a daring thing, though not a presumptuous one. "Had the snow," he said, "been less perfect, I should not have thought of attempting it, but I knew after I had set my foot upon the ridge that we might pass without fear."

It is quite surprising what a number of things the simple observation made by Faraday, in 1846, enables us to explain. Benen's instinctive act is justified by theory. The snow was fine in grain, pure, and moist. When pressed, the attachments of its granules were innumerable, and their perfect cleanness enabled them to freeze together with a maximum energy. It was this freezing together of the particles at innumerable points which gave the mass its sustaining power. Take two fragments of ordinary table ice and bring them carefully together, you will find that they freeze and cement themselves at their place of junction; or if two pieces float in water, you can bring them together, when they instantly freeze, and by laying hold of either of them gently, you can drag the other after it through the water. Imagine such points of attachment distributed without number through a mass of snow. The substance becomes thereby a semi-solid instead of a mass of powder. My guide, however, unaided by any theory, did a thing from which I, though backed by all the theories in the world, should have shrunk in dismay.

After this we found the rocks on the ridge so shaken to pieces that it required the greatest caution to avoid bringing them down upon us. With all our care, however, we sometimes dislodged vast masses which leaped upon the slope adjacent, loosened others by their shock, these again others, until finally a whole flight of them would escape, setting the mountain in a roar as they whizzed and thundered along its side to the snow-fields 4000 feet below us. The day is hot, the work hard, and our bodies are drained of their liquids as by a Turkish bath. The perspiration trickles down our faces, and drops profusely from the projecting points. To make good

our loss we halt at intervals where the melted snow forms a liquid vein, and quench our thirst. We possess, moreover, a bottle of champagne, which, poured sparingly into our goblets on a little snow, furnishes Wenger and myself with many a refreshing draft. Benen fears his eyes, and will not touch champagne. The less, however, we rest the better, for after every pause I find a certain unwillingness to renew the toil. The muscles have become set, and some minutes are necessary to render them again elastic. But the discipline is first-rate for both mind and body. There is scarcely a position possible to a human being which, at one time or another during the day, I was not forced to assume. The fingers, wrist, and forearm were my main reliance, and as a mechanical instrument the human hand appeared to me this day in a light which it never assumed before. It is a miracle of constructive art.

We were often during the day the victims of illusions regarding the distance which we had to climb. For the most part the summit was hidden from us, but on reaching the eminences it came frequently into view. After three hours spent on the *arête*, about five hours, that is, subsequent to starting, the summit was clearly in view; we looked at it over a minor summit, which gave it an illusive proximity. "You have now good hopes," I remarked, turning to Benen. "Not only good hopes," he replied, "but I do not allow myself to entertain the idea of failure." Well, six hours passed on the *arête*, each of which put in its inexorable claim to the due amount of mechanical work; the lowering and the raising of three human bodies through definite spaces, and at the end of this time we found ourselves apparently no nearer to the summit than when Benen's hopes cropped out in confidence. I looked anxiously at my guide as he fixed his weary eyes upon the distant peak. There was no confidence in the expression of his countenance; still I do not believe that either of us entertained for a moment the thought of giving in. Wenger complained of his lungs, and Benen counseled him several times to stop and let him and me continue the ascent; but this the Oberland man refused to do. At the commencement of a day's work I often find myself anxious, if not timid; but this feeling vanishes when I become warm and interested. When the work is very hard we become callous and sometimes stupefied by

the incessant knocking about. This was my case at present, and I kept watch lest my indifference should become carelessness. I supposed repeatedly a case where a sudden effort might be required of me, and felt all through that I had a fair residue of strength to fall back upon. I tested this conclusion sometimes by a spurt; flinging myself suddenly from rock to rock, and thus proved my condition by experiment instead of relying on opinion. An eminence in the ridge which cut off the view of the summit was now the object of our exertions. We reached it; but how hopelessly distant did the summit appear; Benen laid his face upon his ax for a moment; a kind of sickly despair was in his eye as he turned to me, remarking, "Lieber Herr, die Spitze ist noch sehr weit oben."

Lest the desire to gratify me should urge him beyond the bounds of prudence, I said to Benen that he must not persist on my account, if he ceased to feel confidence in his own powers; that I should cheerfully return with him the moment he thought it no longer safe to proceed. He replied that though weary he felt quite sure of himself, and asked for some food. He had it, and a gulp of wine, which mightily refreshed him. Looking at the mountain with a firmer eye, he exclaimed, "Herr! wir müssen ihn haben," and his voice, as he spoke, rung like steel within my heart. I thought of Englishmen in battle, of the qualities which had made them famous; it was mainly the quality of not knowing when to yield; of fighting for duty even after they had ceased to be animated by hope. Such thoughts had a dynamic value, and helped to lift me over the rocks. Another eminence now fronted us, behind which, how far we knew not, the summit lay. We scaled this height, and above us, but clearly within reach, a silvery pyramid projected itself against the blue sky. I was assured ten times by my companions that it was the highest point before I ventured to stake my faith upon the assertion. I feared that it also might take rank with the illusions which had so often beset our ascent, and shrank from the consequent moral shock. Toward the point, however, we steadily worked. A large prism of granite, or granitic gneiss, terminated the *arête*, and from it a knife edge of pure white snow ran up to a little point. We passed along the edge, reached that point, and instantly swept

with our eyes the whole range of the horizon. The crown of the Weisshorn was underneath our feet.

The long-pent feelings of my two guides found vent in a wild and reiterated cheer. Benen shook his arms in the air and shouted as a Valaisian, while Wenger chimed in with the shriller yell of the Oberland. We looked along the *arête*, and far below, perched on one of its crags, could discern the two Randa men. Again and again the roar of triumph was sent down to them. They had accomplished but a small portion of the ridge, and soon after our success they wended their way homeward. They came, willing enough, no doubt, to publish our failure had we failed; but we found out afterwards that they had been equally strenuous in announcing our success; they had seen us, they affirmed, like three flies upon the summit of the mountain. Both men had to endure a little persecution for the truth's sake, for nobody in Randa would believe that the Weisshorn could be scaled, and least of all by a man who for two days previously had been the object of Philomène, the waiter's, constant pity, on account of the incompetence of his stomach to accept all that she offered for its acceptance. The energy of conviction with which the men gave their evidence had, however, convinced the most sceptical before we arrived ourselves.

Benen wished to leave some outward and visible sign of our success on the summit. He deplored having no flag; but as a substitute it was proposed that he should knock the head off his ax, use the handle as a flagstaff, and surmount it by a red pocket-handkerchief. This was done, and for some time subsequently the extempore banner was seen flapping in the wind. To his extreme delight, it was shown to Benen himself three days afterwards by my friend Mr. Galton from the Riffel Hotel. But you will desire to know what we saw from the summit, and this desire I am sorry to confess my total incompetence to gratify. I remember the picture, but cannot analyze its parts. Every Swiss tourist is acquainted with the Weisshorn. I have long regarded it as the noblest of all the Alps, and many, if not most other travelers, have shared this opinion. The impression it produces is in some measure due to the comparative isolation with which its cone

juts into the heavens. It is not masked by other mountains, and all around the Alps its final pyramid is in view. Conversely the Weisshorn commands a vast range of prospect. Neither Benen nor myself had ever seen anything at all equal to it. The day, moreover, was perfect; not a cloud was to be seen; and the gauzy haze of the distant air, though sufficient to soften the outlines and enhance the coloring of the mountains, was far too thin to obscure them. Over the peaks and through the valleys the sunbeams poured, unimpeded save by the mountains themselves, which in some cases drew their shadows in straight bars of darkness through the illuminated air. I had never before witnessed a scene which affected me like this. Benen once volunteered some information regarding its details, but I was unable to hear him. An influence seemed to proceed from it direct to the soul; the delight and exultation experienced were not those of Reason or of Knowledge, but of BEING:—I was part of it and it of me, and in the transcendent glory of Nature I entirely forgot myself as man. Suppose the sea waves exalted to nearly a thousand times their normal height, crest them with foam, and fancy yourself upon the most commanding crest, with the sunlight from a deep blue heaven illuminating such a scene, and you will have some idea of the form under which the Alps present themselves from the summit of the Weisshorn. East, west, north, and south, rose those "billows of a granite sea," back to the distant heaven, which they hacked into an indented shore. I opened my note-book to make a few observations, but I soon relinquished the attempt. There was something incongruous, if not profane, in allowing the scientific faculty to interfere where silent worship was the "reasonable service."

We had been ten hours climbing from our bivouac to the summit, and it was now necessary that we should clear the mountain before the close of day. Our muscles were loose and numbed, and unless extremely urged declined all energetic tension; the thought of our success, however, ran like a kind of wine through our fibers and helped us down. We once fancied that the descent would be rapid, but it was far from it. Benen, as in ascending, took the lead; he slowly cleared each crag, paused till I joined him, I pausing till Wenger joined me, and thus one or other of us was always in

motion. Benen shows a preference for the snow where he can choose it, while I hold on to the rocks where my hands can assist my feet. Our muscles are sorely tried by the twisting round the splintered turrets of the *arête*, and we resolve to escape from it when we can; but a long, long stretch of the ridge must be passed before we dare to swerve from it. We are roused from our stupefaction at times by the roar of the stones which we have loosed from the ridge, and sent leaping down the mountain. The snow catenary is attained, and we recross it. Soon afterwards we quit the ridge and try to get obliquely along the slope of the mountain. The face of the pyramid is here scarred by couloirs, of which the deeper and narrower ones are filled with ice, while the others are highways to the bottom of the mountain for the rocks quarried by the weather above. Steps must be cut in the ice, but the swing of the ax is very different now from what it was in the morning. Still, though Benen's blows descend with the deliberateness of a man whose fire is half-quenched, they fall with sufficient power, and the needful cavities are soon formed. We retrace our morning steps over some of the slopes. No word of warning was uttered here as we ascended, but now Benen's admonitions were frequent and emphatic—"Take care not to slip." I looked down the slopes; they seemed fearfully long, and those whose ends we could see were continued by rocks over which it would be the reverse of comfortable to be precipitated. I imagined, however, that even if a man slipped he would be able to arrest his descent; but Benen's response when I stated this opinion was very prompt—"No! it would be utterly impossible. If it were snow you might do it, but it is pure ice, and if you fall you will lose your senses before you can use your ax." I suppose he was right. At length we turn directly downward, and work along one of the ridges which are here drawn parallel to the line of steepest fall. We first drop cautiously from ledge to ledge. At one place Benen clings for a considerable time to a face of rock, casting out feelers of leg and arm, and desiring me to stand still. I do not understand the difficulty, for the rock though steep is by no means vertical. I fasten myself to it, but Benen is now on a ledge below, waiting to receive me. The spot on which he stands is a little

rounded protuberance sufficient to afford him footing, but over which the slightest momentum would have carried him. He knew this, and hence his caution in descending. Soon after this we quit our ridge and drop into a couloir to the left of it. It is dark and damp with trickling water. The rope hampers us, and I propose its abandonment. We disencumber ourselves, and find our speed greatly increased. In some places the rocks are worn to a powder, along which we shoot by glissades. We swerve again to the left; cross a ridge, and get into another and drier couloir. The last one was dangerous, as the water exerted a constant sapping action upon the rocks. From our new position we could hear the clatter of stones descending the gully which we had just forsaken. Wenger, who had brought up the rear during the day, is now sent to the front; he has not Benen's power, but his legs are long and his descent rapid. He scents out the way, which becomes more and more difficult. He pauses, observes, dodges, but finally comes to a dead stop on the summit of a precipice, which sweeps like a rampart round the mountain. We move to the left, and after a long detour succeed in rounding the rocky wall. Again straight downward. Half-an-hour brings us to the brow of a second precipice, which is scooped out along its center so as to cause the brow to overhang. I see chagrin in Benen's face; he turns his eyes upward, and I fear mortally that he is about to propose a re-ascent to the *arête*. He had actually thought of doing so, but it was very questionable whether our muscles could have responded to such a demand. While we stood pondering here, a deep and confused roar attracted our attention. From a point near the summit of the Weisshorn, a rock had been discharged; it plunged down a dry couloir, raising a cloud of dust at each bump against the mountain. A hundred similar ones were immediately in motion, while the spaces between the larger masses were filled by an innumerable flight of smaller stones. Each of them shakes its quantum of dust in the air, until finally the avalanche is enveloped in a vast cloud. The clatter of this devil's cavalry was stunning. Black masses of rock emerged here and there from the cloud, and sped through the air like flyng fiends. Their motion was not one of translation merely, but they whizzed

and vibrated in their flight as if urged by wings. The clang of echoes resounded from side to side, from the Schallenberg to the Weisshorn and back, until finally the whole troop came to rest, after many a deep-sounding thud in the snow, at the bottom of the mountain. This stone avalanche was one of the most extraordinary things I had ever witnessed, and in connection with it, I would draw the attention of future climbers to the danger which would infallibly beset any attempt to ascend the Weisshorn from this side, except by one of its *arêtes*. At any moment the mountain side may be raked by a fire as deadly as that of cannon.

After due deliberation we move along the precipice westward, I fearing that each step forward is but plunging us into deeper difficulty. At one place, however, the precipice bevels off to a steep incline of smooth rock. Along this runs a crack, wide enough to admit the fingers, and sloping obliquely down to the lower glacier. Each in succession grips the rock and shifts his body sideways parallel to the fissure, until he comes near enough to the glacier to let go and slide down by a rough glissade. We afterwards pass swiftly along the glacier, sometimes running, and, on the steeper slopes, by sliding, until we are pulled up for the third time by a precipice which seems actually worse than either of the others. It is quite sheer, and as far as I can see right or left altogether hopeless. I fully expected to hear Benen sound a retreat, but to my surprise both men turned without hesitation to the right, which took us away from our side of the mountain. I felt desperately blank, but I could notice no expression of dismay in the countenance of either of the men. They observed the moraine matter over which we walked, and at length one of them exclaimed, "Da sind die Spuren," lengthening his strides at the same moment. We look over the brink at intervals, and at length discover what appears to be a mere streak of clay on the face of the precipice. We get round a corner, and find footing on this streak. It is by no means easy, but to hard-pushed men it is a deliverance. The streak vanishes, and we must scrape down the rock. This fortunately is rough, so that by pressing the hands against its rounded protuberances, and sticking the boot-nails against its projecting crystals, we let our bodies grad-

ually down. We thus reach the bottom; a deep cleft separates the glacier from the precipice; this is crossed, and we are now free men, clearly placed beyond the last bastion of the mountain.

I could not repress an expression of admiration at the behavior of my men. The day previous to my arrival at Randa they had been up to examine the mountain, when they observed a solitary chamois moving along the base of this very precipice, and making several ineffectual attempts to get up it. At one place the creature succeeded; this spot they marked in their memories as well as they could, and when they reached the top of the precipice they sought for the traces of the chamois, found them, and were guided by them to the only place where escape in any reasonable time was possible. Our way is now clear; over the glacier we cheerfully march, and pass from the ice just as the moon and the eastern sky contribute about equally to the illumination. Wenger makes direct for our resting-place and packs up our things, while Benen and myself try to descend toward the châlet. Clouds gather round the Rympfischorn and intercept the light of the moon. We are often at a loss, and wander half-bewildered over the Alp. At length the welcome tinkle of cowbells is heard in the distance, and guided by them we reach the châlet a little after 9 P.M. The cows had been milked and the milk disposed of, but the men managed to get us a moderate draft. Thus refreshed we continue the descent, and are soon amid the pines which clothe the mountain facing Randa. A light glimmers from the window of the hotel; we conclude that they are waiting for us; it disappears, and we infer that they have gone to bed. Wenger is sent on to order some food; I was half-famished, for my nutriment during the day consisted solely of a box of meat lozenges given to me by Mr. Hawkins. Benen and myself descend the mountain deliberately, and after many windings emerge upon the valley, cross it, and reach the hotel a little before 11 P.M. I had a basin of broth, *not* made according to Liebig, and a piece of mutton boiled probably for the seventh time. Fortified by these, and comforted by a warm footbath, I went to bed, where six hours' sound sleep chased away every memory of the Weisshorn save the pleasant ones. I was astonished to find the loose atoms of my body knitted so

firmly together by so brief a rest. Up to my attempt upon the Weisshorn I had felt more or less dilapidated, but here all weakness ended. My fibers assumed more and more the tenacity of steel, and during my subsequent stay in Switzerland I was unacquainted with infirmity. If you, my friend, should ask me why I incur such labor and such risk, here is *one* reply.

"Pump, Jenny!"*

On the fifth day [of my walking-tour], about two o'clock, I arrived at a small town. Feeling hungry, I entered a decent-looking inn; within a kind of bar I saw a huge, fat, landlord-looking person, with a very pretty, smartly-dressed maiden. Addressing myself to the fat man, "House!" said I, "house! Can I have dinner, house?"

"Young gentleman," said the huge fat landlord, "you are come at the right time; dinner will be taken up in a few minutes, and such a dinner," he continued, rubbing his hands, "as you will not see every day in these times."

"I am hot and dusty," said I, "and should wish to cool my hands and face."

"Jenny!" said the huge landlord, with the utmost gravity, "show the gentleman into number seven that he may wash his hands and face."

"By no means," said I; "I am a person of primitive habits, and there is nothing like the pump in weather like this."

"Jenny!" said the landlord, with the same gravity as before, "go with the young gentleman to the pump in the back kitchen, and take a clean towel along with you."

Thereupon the rosy-faced, clean-looking damsel went to a drawer, and producing a large, thick, but snowy-white towel, she nodded to me to follow her; whereupon I followed Jenny through a long passage into the back kitchen.

And at the end of the back kitchen there stood a pump; and going to it I placed my hands beneath the spout, and said, "Pump, Jenny"; and Jenny incontinently, without laying down the towel, pumped with one hand, and I washed and cooled my heated hands.

*George Borrow, *Lavengro.*

And, when my hands were washed and cooled, I took off my neckcloth, and unbuttoning my shirt collar, I placed my head beneath the spout of the pump, and I said unto Jenny, "Now, Jenny, lay down the towel, and pump for your life."

Thereupon Jenny, placing the towel on a linen-horse, took the handle of the pump with both hands and pumped over my head as handmaid had never pumped before; so that the water poured in torrents from my head, my face, and my hair down upon the brick floor.

And after the lapse of somewhat more than a minute, I called out with a half-strangled voice, "Hold, Jenny!" and Jenny desisted. I stood for a few moments to recover my breath; then taking the towel which Jenny proffered, I dried composedly my hands and head, my face and hair; then, returning the towel to Jenny, I gave a deep sigh and said, "Surely this is one of the pleasant moments of life."

The Man Who Waited*

"You've got to come into this, Jerry, you've got to. Just think of the rest of the troop; they'd give anythin' for the chance, half of 'em. Why, Tony Le Roy come to me with tears in his eyes an' he says: 'Don't let him come back, Jim, for God's sake; you know we're all with you.' An' he—"

"Come, men, step lively there."

At the sharp word of the Lieutenant three of the little group moved away and busied themselves sullenly with saddles and blankets. Old Donahue went on earnestly:

"There, you see how it goes. He treats us like dogs still, and yet he's afraid of it, damnably afraid of it. I saw him when the Colonel gave him the detail, an' he was as white as a ghost. He's a mean, dirty slob an'—"

The man at his elbow broke in quickly.

"Oh, Jerry'll come with us all right. He ain't afraid to help do the troop's work for 'em."

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*Student's narrative.

The youngest of the three looked up from his dust-covered boot. He was a tall, raw-boned youth, clearly not long from the "awkward squad."

"Yes, I'll come with you," he said slowly.

"Good!" said old Donahue, gripping his hand. "And don't wait."

The gray after-glow of an Arizona sunset hardly outlined the peaks that jutted above the horizon across from the little arroyo where the detail had slept through the torrid day. There were twenty of them besides the Lieutenant, all picked veterans except the recruit, who had been sent along in accordance with a pet theory of the Colonel's as to the proper education of a raw cavalryman. Silently they mounted and rode off down the arroyo in single file; the Lieutenant at the head, next to him the recruit.

The boy rode with a set face, for he knew that out there in the tumble of brown foothills he should meet an awful moment of his life—perhaps the last. He had been wildly delighted when he had learned that he was to go with the detail and get his first taste of fighting; he wanted to feel that he had earned a place among these brown-faced men who had told him how they had felt under fire for the first time; he wanted to know how a bullet would sound going by his hat. Then, since they had been riding three days now, he had wondered how he should feel, and he was not proud of his thoughts; but he had prayed that the time might come quickly so that he might show how steadily he could bear himself in spite of thoughts or feelings.

But now—*now* he had a thing to do that was much more than not running away when the others were watching him. "Don't wait," old Donahue had told him a thousand times. "Don't wait," that was a soldier's first duty, promptness. And now if the chance should come to him first, he must shoot, quick and straight; he had just given his word for that, and he must not miss. If the chance should come to him first—if only it would *not!* To shoot a man in the back, when he was not looking, and a white man in brown khaki—. Yet the whole troop was behind him in it; he knew that well. And the man deserved it richly. He remembered the curses of the troop that he had heard ever since the day he himself had first come to the fort, and the hard words and petty

annoyances that had called them forth. As Donahue had said: "If he was a bit of a boy from the Hudson with Geometry an' Fortifications crowdin' out his decency, we'd pound that out of him with the help of God and the Colonel. As it is, it's one fool too many in the Army."

They had broken it to the boy very suddenly, only today; and he was almost dazed at the thought. He had heard tales of such things whispered in the dark barrackroom long after "lights out," and had never dreamed of giving them more serious credence than the other gruesome yarns that were spun at enormous length to harrow the nerves of young recruits. But he had given his word, he had given his word; the stern Scottish conscience that he thought he had left away in Michigan kept scourging him back to the grim reality. It *was* a dirty business to shoot a man so—still, if the man deserved it? Besides, probably it would be one of the others who would really do it, after all; there were six of them to whom the lot might come. No, there was no relief then; he had given his word, he had given his word; and the deed would be his unalterably, whoever might pull the trigger.

They had crossed the open valley and the glow had quite faded from the sky. Before him he could see the figure of the Lieutenant, dim in the starlight, swaying with the motion of his horse. They entered another arroyo, the shortest path across this chain of hills; and as the Lieutenant rose on a sharp pitch of the ground, his body showed dark against the paler darkness of the sky. The boy looked up at him and wondered whereabouts in that broad back he ought to aim to give the man as little pain as possible. It *was* a nasty business. But he had given his word. And, after all, would not the result be better for everybody? And how could he get out of it if he wanted to? He could not stop and demand his promise back from Donahue, for the old trooper rode last in the line, and the Lieutenant was very strict about talking during a march. He could—

Beyond the Lieutenant, up at the head of the arroyo, a dozen splashes of fire flared at once, and the air was full of the sibilant whine the other men had told him of. Almost before the boy heard the crackle of the reports, the Lieutenant had swung from his

saddle and lay prone on the earth. There had been no order to dismount, and Jerry turned to look at the rest of the file. Every man was flat on his stomach; the second horse behind him was down and fighting, with a gurgle at its throat.

"Down! Get down, man!" fifteen voices called. As he turned again, not yet understanding what had happened, something struck his hat and a section of the brim fell across his eyes. The Lieutenant sprang to his feet with an oath, took the boy by both shoulders and pulled him headlong from his horse. His legs and feet struck heavily; as he gathered himself it suddenly dawned on him that this man had exposed himself to the Indians' fire only to get *him* into comparative shelter. As the Lieutenant crouched again, something struck him in the chest; Jerry heard the thud and the puff of the breath it knocked out of him. The body fell forward and lay across his face. Something warm and wet trickled into his eyes, and he went sick and giddy as he knew what it was. Reckless of the enemy, he tipped the corpse aside and reeled to his feet with its revolver.

"Who shot him? Who shot him? Who shot him?" he screamed to the prone figures around. "Who shot him? I'll send him to hell. I'll—"

Then he fell in a crumpled heap across the body of the Lieutenant, with a bullet through his brain, for the Apaches were picking off every man who moved in the arroyo.

The Necklace*

She was one of those pretty and charming girls, born as by a mistake of destiny, in a family of clerks. She had no dowry, no expectations, no means of being known, understood, loved, or married by a rich and distinguished man; so she let herself be married to an ordinary clerk in the Department of Public Instruction.

She was simple in her dress because she could not be elegant; but she was unhappy, like one kept out of her proper class; for with women there is neither caste nor rank. Their beauty, their grace, and their charm serve instead of birth and family. Native

*Guy de Maupassant (translated by H. C. Schweikert.)

delicacy, an instinct for what is fine, and their nimbleness of wit constitute their only hierarchy, making daughters of the people the equals of the greatest ladies.

She suffered ceaselessly, feeling herself born for every delicacy and every luxury. She suffered because of the poverty of her dwelling, the wretchedness of its walls, the worn chairs, and the ugliness of the hangings. All the things which any other woman of her class would not even have noticed tortured her and made her angry. The sight of the little Breton girl who did her humble housework awoke in her tormenting regrets and distracted dreams. Her mind dwelt on silent anterooms hung with Oriental tapestries, lighted by tall bronze lamps, and on the two tall footmen in knee breeches, dozing in the big armchairs, made drowsy by the heavy warmth of the stove. She thought of long parlors decorated with old silk, of delicate furniture laden with precious bric-à-brac, and of coquettish little rooms, scented, made for the small-talk at five o'clock with one's most intimate friends, men well known and much sought after, whose attention is the envy and desire of every woman.

When she sat down to dinner, at the round table covered with a cloth three days old, opposite her husband, who uncovered the tureen, and said with an air of satisfaction, "Ah, the good *pot-au-feu!* I don't know anything better than that," she was thinking of dainty repasts, with shining silver, of tapestry which peopled the walls with ancient personages and strange birds in the midst of a fairy forest; and of exquisite dishes served on marvelous plates, of whispered gallantries listened to with sphinx-like smile, while eating the pink flesh of a trout or the wings of a quail.

She had no dresses, no jewels, nothing. And she loved nothing more than that; she felt herself made for that. She would so much have liked to please, to be envied, to be attractive and sought after.

She had a rich friend, a companion of her convent days, whom she no longer wanted to go to see, because she suffered so much when she returned. And she wept all day long, from chagrin, from regret, from despair, and from distress.

But one evening her husband came home with an air of triumph, holding a large envelope in his hand.

"There," said he, "there is something for you."

She quickly tore the paper and drew out a printed card which bore these words:

"The Minister of Public Instruction and Mme. Georges Ramponneau beg M. and Mme. Loisel to honor them with their presence at the palace of the Ministry, Monday, January 18."

Instead of being delighted, as her husband hoped, she disdainfully threw the invitation on the table, murmuring:

"What am I to do with that?"

"But, my dear, I thought you would be pleased. You never go out, and here is an opportunity, a splendid one. I had considerable trouble to get it. Everybody is after them; it is a very select affair and not many are given to clerks. The entire official world will be there."

She looked at him with an expression of irritation and declared impatiently:

"What am I to put on my back to go there?"

He had not thought of that; he stammered:

"Why, the dress you wear to the theater. That seems very fine to me."

Astonished and distracted, he said nothing more. His wife was crying. Two large tears rolled slowly from the corners of her eyes to the corners of her mouth. He stuttered:

"What's the matter? What's the matter?"

But by a violent effort she had overcome her difficulty, and she replied in a calm voice, as she wiped her moist cheeks:

"Nothing. Only I have no clothes and therefore can't go to this affair. Give your card to some colleague whose wife has better clothes than I."

He was grieved. He resumed:

"Let's see, Mathilde. How much would a suitable dress cost, one which you could use on other occasions, something very simple?"

She reflected several seconds, making calculations, and thinking also of the sum she could ask without an immediate refusal and a frightened exclamation from the economical clerk.

At last she replied, hesitatingly:

"I don't know exactly, but I believe I could do with four hundred francs."

He grew pale, for he was reserving just that amount to purchase a gun and treat himself to a little shooting the coming summer on the plain of Nanterre with several friends who used to go there Sundays to shoot larks.

However, he said:

"All right. I'll give you four hundred francs. But do try to have a pretty dress."

The day of the party was drawing near, and Mme. Loisel seemed sad, restless, anxious. Her dress was ready, however. Her husband said to her one evening:

"What's the matter? You've been quite queer the last three days."

And she answered:

"It annoys me not to have a single jewel, not a stone to put on. I shall look wretched. I'd almost rather not go to the reception."

"You could wear natural flowers. It's very stylish this time of the year. For ten francs you can get two or three magnificent roses."

She was not convinced.

"No; there's nothing more humiliating than to look poor among women who are rich."

But her husband continued:

"How stupid of you! Go find your friend Mme. Forestier, and ask her to lend you some jewelry. You have been close enough to her to do that."

She gave a cry of joy:

"That's true. I had not thought of that."

The next day she went to her friend and told her distress.

Mme. Forestier went to her mirrored wardrobe, took out a large jewelry box, opened it, and said to Mme. Loisel:

"Choose, my dear."

First she saw some bracelets, then a pearl necklace, then a Venetian cross, gold and precious stones, of admirable workmanship. She tried on the ornaments before the glass, hesitated, and could not make up her mind to leave them, to give them back. She kept on asking:

"You haven't any others?"

"Why, yes. Look. I don't know what may please you."

All at once she discovered, in a box of black satin, a superb diamond necklace, and her heart began to beat with immoderate longing. Her hands trembled as she took it up. She fastened it around her neck, over her high-necked dress, and was rapt in ecstasy at the sight of herself.

Then she asked, hesitatingly, full of anxiety:

"Can you let me have this, only this?"

"Why, yes; certainly."

She sprang upon her friend's neck, embraced her warmly, and then escaped with her treasure.

The day of the party came. Mme. Loisel was a success. She was the best looking of them all, elegant, gracious, smiling, and crazy with joy. All the men were looking at her, asking who she was, and seeking an introduction. All the attachés of the Cabinet wanted to waltz with her. The Minister himself took notice of her.

She danced in a transport of delight, intoxicated with pleasure, thinking of nothing, in the triumph of her beauty, in the glory of her success, in a sort of cloud of happiness produced by all this homage and admiration, of this victory so complete and so dear to the heart of woman.

She left about four in the morning. Her husband had been sleeping since midnight in a small deserted anteroom with three other gentlemen whose wives were having a good time.

He threw over her shoulders the wraps he had brought, modest wraps of everyday life, the poverty of which was in contrast with the elegance of her ball dress. She felt this and wished to get away without being noticed by the other women who were wrapping themselves up in rich furs.

Loisel held her back.

"Wait a minute. You'll catch cold. I'll call a cab."

But she did not listen to him, and went rapidly down the stairs. When they came to the street they could not find a carriage; and they began to look for one, shouting to drivers whom they saw at a distance.

They went down toward the Seine, in disgust and shivering

from the cold. Finally they found on the quay one of those old night carriages which one does not see in Paris until after nightfall, as if they were ashamed of their wretchedness during the day.

It took them to their door, Rue des Martyrs, and sadly they mounted their own steps. It was all over, for her. He, on the other hand, was thinking that he would have to be at the office by ten o'clock.

She removed the wraps from her shoulders, before the looking-glass, in order to see herself once more in her glory. But all at once she gave a cry. She no longer had the necklace around her neck!

Her husband, already half undressed, asked:

"What's the matter?"

She turned to him in terror:

"I—I—I no longer have Mme. Forestier's necklace."

He rose, frightened.

"What?—How?—It isn't possible!"

And they searched the folds of her dress, the folds of her cloak, the pockets, everywhere. But they did not find it.

He asked:

"You are sure that you still had it when leaving the ball?"

"Yes, I touched it while in the vestibule of the Ministry."

"But if you had lost it in the street we should have heard it drop. It must be in the carriage."

"Yes, very likely. You took his number?"

"No. And you, didn't you look at it?"

"No."

They looked at one another, thoroughly upset. Finally Loisel dressed again.

"I'm going back over the whole route," said he, "on foot, to see if I can't find it."

And he went out. She remained there, in her evening gown, without strength to go to bed, utterly depressed, without a fire, without thought.

Her husband returned about seven o'clock. He had not found it.

He went to the Prefecture of Police, to the newspapers to offer a reward, to the cab companies; indeed, he went wherever a glimmer of hope impelled him to go.

She waited all day, in the same state of distraction over this frightful disaster.

Loisel came home in the evening, with his face pale and sunken; he had discovered nothing.

"You must write to your friend," he said, "that you have broken the clasp of the necklace and that you are having it repaired. That will give us time to turn round."

She wrote as he dictated.

At the end of the week they had lost all hope.

And Loisel, who had aged five years, declared:

"We must see about replacing that piece of jewelry."

Next day they took the box in which it had been contained to the jeweler whose name was on the inside. He consulted his books.

"It was not I, madame, who sold that necklace. I must only have furnished the case."

Then they went from one jeweler to another, searching for a necklace like the other, consulting their memories, sick, both of them, with chagrin and anxiety.

In a shop in the Palais Royal they found a diamond necklace which seemed to them quite like the one they were looking for. It was priced at forty thousand francs, but they could have it for thirty-six.

They begged the jeweler not to sell it for three days. And they made a bargain that he would take it back for thirty-four thousand francs if the other was found before the end of February.

Loisel had eighteen thousand francs which his father had left him. He had to borrow the rest.

He borrowed, asking a thousand francs from one, five hundred from another, five louis here, five there. He gave notes, made ruinous obligations, did business with the whole tribe of money-lenders. He compromised all the rest of his existence, risked his signature without even knowing whether he could meet his obligation; and, terrified by the anguish of the future, by the black misery which was going to fall upon him, by the prospect of physical privations and moral tortures of every kind, he went and bought the necklace, laying down thirty-six thousand francs on the jeweler's counter.

When Mme. Loisel took the necklace back, Mme. Forestier said, with an air of inquiry: "You should have brought it back sooner, for I might have needed it."

Her friend had been in dread lest Mme. Forestier should open the case, but her fear was groundless. If she had observed the substitution, what would she have thought? What would she have said? Would she not have been taken for a thief?

Mme. Loisel now experienced the horrible life of the needy. Presently, however, she took her part heroically. That frightful debt had to be paid. She would pay it. They sent the servant away; they changed lodgings; they rented an attic under a roof.

She learned what heavy housework was, the disagreeable duties of the kitchen. She washed the dishes, wearing off her rosy nails on the greasy kettles and the bottoms of the pans. She washed the soiled linen, the shirts, and all the rougher things, which she dried on a line; every morning she carried the garbage down to the street, and brought up the water, stopping to regain her breath on every landing. And, dressed like a woman of the people, she went to the fruiterer, the grocer, the butcher, with her basket on her arm, bargaining, insulted, fighting sou by sou with her wretched money.

They had to pay some notes each month, and renew others to gain time.

Her husband worked evenings making fair copies of a tradesman's accounts, and at night he often did copying at five sous a page.

And this life lasted ten years.

At the end of ten years they had repaid everything, rates of usury, accumulations of compound interest, all.

Mme. Loisel seemed old now. She had become a typical woman of a poor household, strong, hard, and rough. With hair badly combed, her skirts untidy, and her hands red, she talked in a loud voice, and washed the floor with copious splashings of water. But, at times, when her husband was at the office, she would sit down by the window, and think of that evening of long ago, of that ball where she had been so beautiful and so courted.

What would have happened if she had not lost that necklace?

Who knows? Who knows? How singular is life, and how changeable! How little a thing it takes to be lost or saved!

But, one Sunday, as she was taking a walk in the Champs-Elysées as a relief from her cares of the week, she all at once saw a woman walking with a child. It was Mme. Forestier, still young, still beautiful, still attractive.

Mme. Loisel was moved. Should she go and speak to her? Why, certainly. Now that she had paid, she would tell her everything. Why not?

She approached her.

"Good afternoon, Jeanne."

The other woman did not recognize her, and was astonished at being spoken to so familiarly by this woman of the common people. She stammered:

"But, madame—I do not know—You must have made a mistake."

"No. I am Mathilde Loisel."

"Oh!—My poor Mathilde, how you have changed!"

"Yes, I have indeed had hard days since I last saw you; and much misery—and that because of you."

"Of me—How can that be?"

"You remember that diamond necklace you lent me to go to the ball at the Ministry?"

"Yes. What of that?"

"Well, I lost it."

"What? Why, you returned it."

"I bought you one just like it. And for ten years we've been paying for it. You will understand that it was no easy matter for us, who had nothing. At last that is over, and I'm happy enough."

Mme. Forestier had stopped.

"You say that you bought a diamond necklace to replace mine?"

"Yes. You didn't even notice it, then, did you? They were very much alike."

And she smiled with a proud and naïve joy.

Mme. Forestier, strongly moved, took hold of both her hands.

"Oh! My poor Mathilde! Why, mine was false. It was worth at most five hundred francs!"

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